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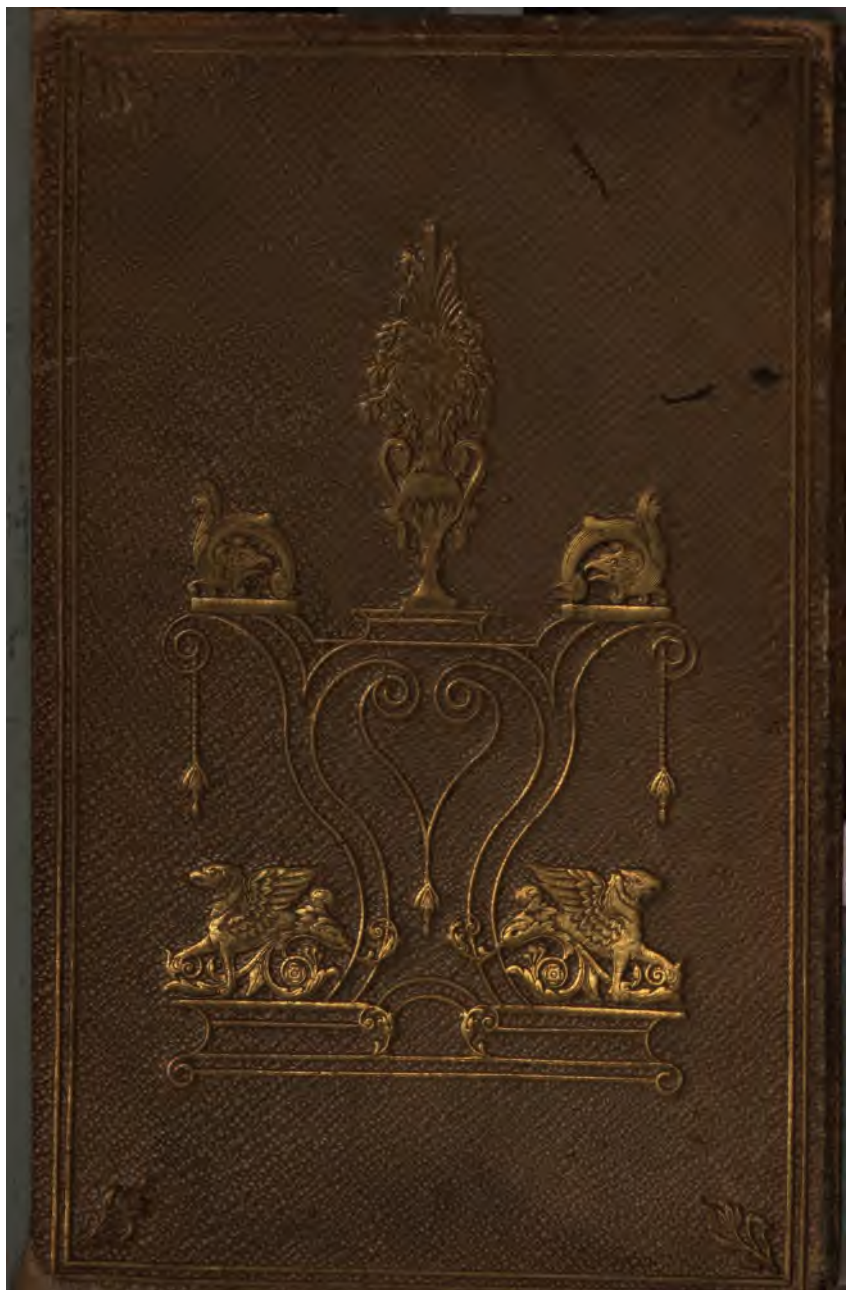
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THE
PROPHECY OF BALAAM,
THE QUEEN'S CHOICE,
AND OTHER POEMS.

BY HELEN LOWE,
AUTHOR OF "CEPHALUS AND PROCRIS," ETC.



EXETER:
P. A. HANNAFORD.
JOHN MURRAY, LONDON.

MDCCCXLI.

280 . 0 . 572 .

TO HER GRACE
THE DUCHESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND,
THE FOLLOWING POEMS
ARE INSCRIBED,
WITH EVERY SENTIMENT
OF GRATEFUL RESPECT, BY
THE AUTHOR.

CONTENTS.

	Page
THE PROPHECY OF BALAAM	1
THE QUEEN'S CHOICE	89
THE TRAGICAL STORY OF DAPHLES AND DORACLES	179
THE SLEEPLESS NIGHT	195
THE PORTRAIT	204
THE SEVENTEENTH OF MAY	207
ERINNA	212
HYMNS FROM NOVALIS	216

THE PROPHECY OF BALAAM.

A DRAMATIC POEM.

חַיִּים יוֹדְעִים נִשְׁמְתוּ
וְדַמְתִּים אֵינָם יוֹדְעִים מְאוּמָּה
וְאִיזְעוּד לָהֶם שֹׁכֵר

“ We are saved by hope.”

Rom. viii. 24.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

BALAAH.		
JOHANAN.		
ZURIEL.		
MAHALA.	} DAUGHTERS OF ZELOPHEHAD. }	ISRAELITES.
THIRZA.		
MILCAH.		
LEVITE.		
BALAK, KING OF MOAB.		
ZUR, PRINCE OF MIDIAN.		
MEETABEL, HIS DAUGHTER.		
PRIEST OF CHEMOSH.		
LORDS, MESSENGERS, SERVANTS, ETC.		
THE ARCHANGEL PHANUEL.		
THE ANGELS OF PESTILENCE AND SLAUGHTER.		
SATAN.		
SPIRITS.		

The Scene is first at Pethor, afterwards in the land of Moab.

THE
PROPHECY OF BALAAM.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Pethor—On the banks of the Euphrates.*

BALAAM.

DAY draweth to a close ; one other span
Is added to the past, and brings me nearer
The final term of all we know of being.
Thou glorious orb, at once best emblem of
Th' Eternal, and remembrancer of time's
Hourly decay, declare, what is thy goal ?
And whence thy due return ? The confines broad
Of earth and sky thou only hast explored.
Would I might pass with thee yon golden verge,
Where seems the mighty river's sea-vast flood
To blend with heaven in light ineffable !
Methinks, e'en from thine aspect emanate
Some aspirations of a better future
Than all the learning and deep thought of sages
Have ever yet revealed. O, fruitless pains !
With the Chaldeans have I read the stars,
And on their heavenly influences called,
In vain, t' illuminate the secrets of

Our lot beyond the grave. And I have sought
From Mizraim's symbol'd records to draw forth
The origin of gods and man ; the end
Whither all nature tends. What my reward ?
They taught me but their insufficiency
To quench the soul's immortal thirst.

At length,

The mighty floods descended—suddenly,
Unsought, unasked—for inspiration brake ;
Yea, God himself, to mine astonished spirit
The mysteries of futurity unveiled.
O, awful revelation ! dreadful power !
The crown and scourge of mine ambitious hope ;
To read man's destiny is but to know
More surely all is vanity ; life a shadow ;
This boasted being to terminate in dust,
From whence it sprang. Far happier they who
seize

The present hour and wield it to their purpose.
The meanest despot whose irrational will
Some score of brawny slaves must execute,
Hath more observance than attends on him
Who owns but wisdom for his minister.
This also have I found, that to be wise
Above our race, is to be miserable.

Enter a Servant.

SERVANT.

My lord the prophet, tidings.

BALAAM.

Speak ; what are they ?

SERVANT.

Some mighty lords, as by their state I judge,
Ev'n now arriving at thy gate, crave audience
On matters of high import.

BALAAM.

Do they not
Declare from whence they come?

SERVANT.

From distant lands
Was all I learnt.

BALAAM.

Bid them approach; I will
Receive them here.

SERVANT.

To hear is to obey. [Exit.

BALAAM.

Princes from far-off regions seek me out —
This savours of some greatness, and much glory,
And shadows forth increase of both. Yet pause,
My mounting thoughts! your darker prescience urges
This visit shall not be for good. A dread,
Most solemn and mysterious, chains my soul,
As the still hour ere the tempest bursts,
Portending strange adventure, charged with fate
Of many nations.

(Enter the Messengers of Balak.)

Strangers, hail! Whence are ye?

MESSENGER.

Great Prophet, by the King of Moab sent,
We bear his greeting. Having heard the fame

Of thy deep wisdom, and unerring knowledge
Of all the future secret holds, as one
Most favour'd of the gods, he craves thine aid
In our great peril and emergency.
Know, that a wondrous race, numberless as
The desert sands, have since man's memory
Dwelt in the hungry wilderness, sustained
By magic power, hovering upon the skirts
Of neighbouring lands ; but now advancing swift,
An irresistible flood, they sweep before them
Opposing nations ; and our mighty foes,
The Amorites, o'erpowered, like a cloud
Of locusts darkening heaven, they swarm along
Our plains twice ravaged, and possession hold
Of Heshbôn, Aroer, and the fertile vales
From Arnon to Abarim's mountain chain.

BALAAM.

This have I heard from rumour's dubious tongue ;
But more inquire in vain — their destiny
Lies hid with the Omniscient. Proceed ;
From me what doth your king demand ?

MESSENGER.

That thou by divination counteract
Their dread enchantments ; mightier Powers than
theirs
Invoke, and call down curses that may blast
Their myriads with confusion. Doing thus,
Balak to highest honour will exalt thee,
And satisfy thy soul's desire with gold.

BALAAM.

My power is not mine own ; I cannot speak
But as the Lord shall prompt me ; nor go forth
With ye, unless at His behest. Retire,
And wait this night ; alone, beneath the sky,
Mid silence and o'er-shadowing gloom must I
Th' Almighty will require.

MESSENGER.

Propitious prove

Thine inspiration !

[*Exeunt.*]

BALAAM.

Truly is it said,

A prophet hath no honour in his home ;
Here am I mean, and made of small account,
Yet fame hath found me out, and leadeth fortune
To lay her glittering offerings at my feet.
And what am I, in truth ?—a thing of clay,—
The powerless organ of inscrutable
Decrees I durst not look into.

O Thou,

Most holy, most exalted, unseen Being,
Dare I approach Thy throne with groveling thought,
Polluted by earth's taint ? with ears unhallowed
Thy thunders hear ? yet, for Thy glory's sake,
That I might spread Thy knowledge among men,
Grant my request ; vouchsafe an answering voice.

He comes — He comes ! I feel thy near approach,
Tremendous spirit ! rushing o'er my soul,
Possessing and o'er-mastering every sense,

Like torrent fires. My weak frame staggers—sinks—
The dews of death are on my brow, its haze
Bedims mine eye—ah me, unworthy!—spare—

[He falls into a trance.]

A Voice is heard from the Spirits of the Air.

FIRST SPIRIT.

We must depart ; no more delay !
Ere the Surpassing Presence
Crusheth our frail essence,
Hence, to our airy homes, away !
To caves where the winds lie in slumber bound,
Where the stores of the lightning and thunder are
found,
There let us hide ; our task is o'er ;
Where holiness enters we rule no more.

SECOND SPIRIT.

Nay ; permitted here we dwell
Since man from holiness first fell.
Wait and watch awhile, O spirit !
That heart our spells shall long inherit,
Once bowed to sordid gain.
No, our power is not lost ;
Still his soul, by passion tost,
Shall struggle in our chain.
Though the Effluence divine
Absorbeth now his thoughts from ill,
To earth again shall they incline,
And vain enchantments cherish still.
I'll paint the gorgeous clouds of eve
With pageants false his hopes to grieve ;

And in the visions of the night
Bring pomp and wealth to charm his sight.
The stars that watch him from above,
No higher his desires shall move
Than this vile sphere of dust and strife ;
Till blotted from eternal life,
The tool of evil, slave of sin,
Our master's realms of darkness win
This wisest son of man, this gifted seer,
Whose love to earth belongs, — to Heaven his fear.

FIRST SPIRIT.

Yet must we wait awhile, and watch apart ;
For sacred Peace still guards the portal of his heart.

BALAAM (*rises*).

O earth, O placid sky, look down upon me !
I am your child ; your meek communion brings
Revival to my weary o'er-spent spirit.
Fresh gales, breathe on me ; cooling dews descend,
And bathe my languid brow ; mean instruments
Of your Creator's will, with ye, content,
The remnant of my days I spend in calm,
Submissive to His word. How tedious now,
How poor those glories and vain pomps appear,
That filled my heart, my brain with keen desire !
Farewell to all ! Balak, thy quest is vain ;
The prophet turneth not for fear or gain.

SCENE II. *The Israelitish encampment on the plains of Moab. Thirza and Milcah seated under some trees, near their Tent.*

THIRZA (*sings*).

See, the cedar flinging
Her dark locks on the gale ;
Hark, the fountain singing
Down the flowery vale.

Dear to us their greeting,
From desert sands who come ;
But swiftly pass our meeting !
Not this the promised home.

O ! 'ere sweet spring-tide closes
Beneath warm summer's glow,
'Twill show us how the roses
On the banks of Jordan blow.

MILCAH.

Sing on, dear sister ; couldst thou sing for ever
Methinks that I untired would listen still ;
Thy voice is sweeter than the nightingales'
That yester-eve, from yonder citron-grove,
First welcome gave us wanderers. And the while,
How richly spread beneath thy fingers glow
These mimic flowers and leaves, as beautiful
As Nature bids them spring her bowers among.
O, when shall I with such rare skill adorn

The sacred hangings of our Tabernacle,
And bring an offering worthy of the Lord !

THIRZA.

These also are thine offering, dearest ; thou
Didst choose the garlands for my broidery.
These purple-clustered spikes, this golden cup,
Filled with pure sun-light, all these blossoms fair
Are thy providing—art but vainly strives
To imitate their bloom.

MILCAH.

What joy it was,
When early morning dawned, to seek them out,
Within their dewy, fragrant, green recesses !
Their beauty seemed with smiles upturned to greet
me,
Like new-found friends. Surely, there cannot show
On all the earth a lovelier spot than this.
And must we leave it, onward still to fare ?

THIRZA.

Some will remain, whose pleasant lot is cast
By Arnon, or in Sibmah's vine-clad vale ;
But over Jordan's stream the promised land,
Where our great patriarchs sleep in Hebron's cave,
With Lebanon, and Salem's sacred towers
Await our heritage.

MILCAH.

I have heard men say
That we are nameless orphans, and our father
Left no one to preserve his race, or claim
His portion in the soil.

THIRZA.

Do they forget
Who is the Father of the fatherless ?—
Trust me, dear child, thy birthright shall appear
Above the daughters of our tribes ; and know,
Our names shall never die while earth endures.

MILCAH.

How gladness beameth from thy words, thine eyes,
And fills mine heart as though an angel spoke !

Enter MAHALA.

MAHALA.

Sisters, rejoice ; our warriors are returned,
Victorious from the fight. We must go forth,
And welcome them with timbrels and the voice
Of triumph and thanksgiving.

THIRZA.

And our friends,
Are they restored ?

MAHALA.

All, all are safe ; our kinsmen,
And Zuriel too, whose headlong valour finds
Delight in danger.

THIRZA.

See ; our father's brother
Cometh to summon us.

Enter JOHANAN.

JOHANAN.

Prepare yourselves,
Ye daughters of Zelophehad, to meet

The entrance of our brave triumphant hosts ;
Not far from hence they wait till noon-tide heat
Be past ; at evening watch they will be here.
To thee, O Thirza, since the reverend head
Of Miriam in the desert grave was laid,
The task devolves to lead our virgin choir ;
For thou, though young in years, and of slight
thought,
As to thy sex pertaineth, hast received
The fullest measure of inspired song.

THIRZA.

The song should be of joy and victory ;
And yet a cloud before my spirit lours
Of wide impending woe.

JOHANAN.

Peace, idle girl ;
This is not in thy province. What tho' Moab
Array himself against the Lord ? though tidings
Reach us that he with sorceries and dark magic
Would bring a curse upon our arms, shall we,
The chosen race, the Heaven-defended, fear ?

THIRZA.

The voice of wailing that I heard, was not
From battle-field or desolated home ;
But echoed from loud scenes of revelry,
And misruled mirth. Be not displeased, Johanan ;
No shadow of the future shall obscure
My present praise or trust in promised blessings.
Leave me a little while, and I will seek
Accordant harmonies to such high theme.

JHEAVAN.

Search not fine phrases or self-glorying art ;
But rather for an humble, grateful mind ;
So, prosper thine attempt !

MILCAH.

Farewell, sweet sister.

[They retire.]

THIRZA.

On lowliest vale the smile of Heaven resteth,
And fountains mid the wilderness may spring ;
And even so, the ray divine investeth
Our souls in thralldom noblest theme to sing ;
Touched with pure fire to tell Thy wondrous ways,
And celebrate, O Lord of might ! Thy praise.

O, glorious privilege ! and fraught
With joys surpassing mortal gain ;
Yet steeped in bitter tears, and bought
With price of more than human pain.
A heavy yoke, a grievous law
Th' aspiring spirit still must earthward draw ;
For ours is knowledge unendued
With power its purpose to fulfil ;
Ours, clear, aspiring thoughts, subdued
To baser force and uncurbed will.
Bound to mean cares and servitude,
Unhonoured, unrewarded still,
We stand alone, the gifted, but in vain,
And communing with Heaven endure man's chain.

O, happy were those infant years,
Tho' shadow'd by foreboding fears,
Ere yet its solitude my spirit knew ;
But day by day, more subtle strong
The dark threads round me closer clung,
The intricate web of life about me grew.
Till, like the prison'd bird, I longed to try
My useless pinions thro' yon azure sky,
And speed my free flight to some regions new.
Ay, o'er those western bounds aspire,
Where flows the mighty flood of fire
That duly, when his bright orb sinks,
The golden stream of sunset drinks ;
Far in the sullen north behold
Mountains, of whose heaped gloom 'tis told
Stern winter's storms and clouds have birth ;
And soaring on and on, forget
What sorrows here our path beset,
Nor captive stoop again to this dull earth.

But never more, illusive dreams, return ;
Since here my portion is assigned,
Here let me strive with patient heart to learn
All duties with affection intertwined,
To dry the tears of others, hide mine own ;
While, ever silent and unknown,
One holy hope, immortal, unexpressed,
Dawns from beyond the grave within my breast ;
Soft peace diffusing o'er reluctant gloom,
Whence wakes my voice in song, my thoughts
unfading bloom.

Enter ZURIEL.

ZURIEL.

Thirza !

THIRZA.

O warrior ! welcome,— ever welcome ;
But now tenfold, from righteous battle sped.

ZURIEL.

Ah ! meet me ever thus, with beaming eye,
And smile more glad than day-break ; I 'd outserve
The term our father Jacob waited ; pour
My blood like water, and be well repaid,
At last, by this one moment's bliss.

THIRZA.

And thou,

Zuriel, didst never with such radiant brow
And lofty step from idle wanderings come.
Yea, victory is written on thy front,
With toils not fruitless, dangers rightly dared.
Such is their meed who fight and serve beneath
Jehovah's banner just.

ZURIEL.

My dearest meed

Is here — and having brought me to thy feet,
I 'll bless our victories. Since on Edrei's plain
The giant king of Bashan and his hosts
In one red slaughter fell, on this side Jordan
No foe to Israel remains. Beyond,
Ere long, must we pursue them and raze out
Their being from earth's face.

THIRZA.

Alas ! how dread
Their doom, thus trodden down and extirpate,
That we, the desert children, homeless race,
Might enter in and peacefully possess
Their native bowers of bliss and household joys.

ZURIEL.

Thirza ! it is a fearful cruel sight,
When, the fierce conflict done, the sword that should
Be sheathed in mercy, must its work complete
With indiscriminate carnage—streets run blood,
And murdered mothers, infancy, old age,
In horrid heaps choke up the ways where late
Their peaceful thresholds stood. But 'tis ordained ;
And why deplore ? our chequered lot, alike
With pain and joy alternate strown, but leads
Or soon or late to nothingness and dust.

THIRZA.

Speak not so wildly. Is there then no choice
'Twixt good and evil ? Think how these have
perished,
Whose dark idolatries and sins cried out
Against them to high Heaven, that in their place
The holy worship of our God might be
Established evermore. Then wars shall cease,
And trouble and distress—then quiet rest
Our weary roamings crown.

ZURIEL.

The elements
Of strife we bear within ; nor time, nor place,

No outward circumstance can bring repose,
 Foreign to human life, since our first parents
 The tree of knowledge plucked; but most restrained,
 Like pent-up fires they inwardly consume.
 I've seen in Kedar's tents, amid the wilds
 Where the free sons of Ishmael lawless range,
 A nobler nature, and not more of crime
 Than Israel's strict-ruled tribes can boast.

THIRZA.

Alas !

Thou wilt not murmur at the law divine,
 O'ershadowing us from wrong?

ZURIEL.

Not so, dear maid ;

'Tis not my fault, the blood that in these veins
 With such impatience boileth. Who can tame
 The mountain orad's wind-outstripping speed,
 Or bend his proud neck to the yoke ? Our fathers,
 Brought up to servitude beneath that brood
 Of Ham, whom plagues consume ! they might have
 been

Ignorant, slavish, most unfit to rule
 Themselves in freedom ; but must we remain
 For ever in this pupilage, shut out
 From reason's choice ?

THIRZA.

No mortal can be free,
 Since Sin her empire 'stablished upon earth.
 Some serve their passions, some the despot will
 Of fellow-man ; but we beneath the rule

All-just, all-merciful, of God abide.
And more His glorious covenant provides —
We are the thralls of better hope.

ZURIEL.

Say rather,
Sold bond-slaves of futurity. We toil
And sow what others are to reap hereafter.
Yet look not thou so sad—my curbless spirit
Hath ever bowed to thee, and shall remain
True to thy gentle guidance.

THIRZA.

I must grieve
To see my kinsmen, and our elders frown
On thee, and count thee as one wayward,—nay,
Almost as rebel.

ZURIEL.

There they do me wrong.
I worship the Supreme with equal faith ;
But do abhor their strict observances,
And shackles ev'n on thought.

THIRZA.

Dost thou remember
What time, when in Zalmonah we abode,
Were fiery serpents sent, our sins to chide ;
And at the people's penitence and prayer,
Our lawgiver divine, at God's command,
Uplifted for their cure the brazen shape,
And all who looked were healed ?

ZURIEL.

Yes, from Mount Seir.

Returning then, never can I forget
The scene of horror met me in our camp.
I saw my parents, friends, stretched out in torture,
Gasping for life ; — I saw the reptiles writhe
About their limbs, adding fresh stings to death ;
Maddening with grief, I rushed to them and stamped
On poisonous fangs, regardless of their wounds ;
Yet vainly strove, till thou, O Thirza ! cam'st,
Fearless and calm, and bad'st our faint eyes turn
Where sure relief was dealt. I scarce could gaze
On aught save thee — sweet restoration seemed
From thy bright aspect to proceed — so like
An angel, with thy golden hair, amidst
That dark confusion, gently didst thou glide.

THIRZA.

Then didst thou find how faith and meek obedience
Prevail where force is nought.

ZURIEL.

It is most true.
From thee I learnt that lesson ; — let me still
Renew it from thy lips. My morning star !
Whose ray dispels the mind's unquiet gloom,
Shine on me ever, till my soul reflect
An image of the purity of thine.

THIRZA.

O choose a source less frail and perishable ! —
But I forget my task ; the hour draws near ;
Our maiden choir await me ; we must part.
Yet come a little way, — I would disclose
Somewhat, importing much our present state.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The entrance of the Israelite army.
Procession of Maidens.*

CHORUS.

Welcome, ye warrior host,
To fields your valour won !
More glorious triumph now ye boast,
And seek repose from conflict done ;
For He was with you still, the Lord of Might,
And scattered wide your foes, and crushed them in
the fight.

In vain fierce Amorite,
And Bashan's haughty head
Against His will their power unite—
Low in the grave together laid.
So perish all who madly would conspire
Against eternal truth, and dare His vengeance dire !

On Zoan's plain long while
Our sires in bondage mourned,
And drank thy muddy wave, O Nile !
Till He in pity towards them turned ;
Mindful of Abraham's faith and Jacob's prayer,
He sent them forth by Moses, 'neath His guardian
care.

Thro' the vast solitude
He led them like a flock ;
And satisfied with angels' food,
And water from the flinty rock ;

Yet they rebelled against His holy word,
And turned to sin, and worshipped things abhorred.

O may we never more
Provoke His fearful wrath,
Vexing with thankless murmurs sore
The Love Divine illumining our path,
That now with conquest and dominion wide
Our long-expectant souls hath plenteously supplied.

The trumpet's sound prolong,
And let glad shouts reply,
With tuneful cymbals and with song
While thus our praise ascends on high ;
Hailing your glad return, O victors blest !
Lauding Thy Name, Most High, with thankfulness
confest.

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A city of Moab.*

BALAK, *Lords, and Attendants.*

BALAK.

Where linger yet my messengers ? again,
This second time shall I have sent in vain ?
Shall Moab's noblest sons and Midian's princes
In vain with costliest bribes have sued before
This man of Pethor ?

LORD.

Lo ! a train draweth nigh ;

O king ! they come,

BALAK.

And who is he, that in the midst
With such serene, majestic presence moves ?
This must be whom I sought.

Enter BALAAM and Messengers.

MESSENGER.

My lord, we bring
Balaam the son of Beor, as you bade.

BALAK.

Welcome, great Prophet ! wondrous fame hath
reached us
Of thee ; but for thy coming long we waited.

BALAAM.

Pardon, O Balak, if a mightier Power
Than that of earthly kings my will obeys.
Hardly, with much entreaty, and, I fear,
Not without blame, permission have I wrung
From Him I serve, thy mandate to attend.
Whether thy purpose to fulfil or cross,
He only may declare.

BALAK.

I know the God
Who leads mine enemies, hath power above
Our Chemosh, Moloch, or the Baalim
Of neighbouring states — they stoop beneath His arm ;
But if thou art His prophet, obtain from Him
Blessing on us — for them a curse. Thou know'st
Thy measureless reward.

BALAAM.

O King, give ear
To my relation ; then, declare if thirst
Of worldly lucre may infect the soul
That feels th' Almighty near. As, once denied,
With twice-sought leave, upon my way I rode,
A vision came before me, yet mine eyes
Discerned it not — the Angel of the Lord
With flaming sword stood in my path, and blind
Thro' violent will I rushed upon destruction,
When the dumb ass with speech articulate
Reproved my frenzy, and my forfeit life
Delivered from the avenging stroke.

BALAK.

What then,
O son of Beor ? Didst thou still persist ?

BALAAM.

I knew my sin, and would have turned ; but now
Commanded, come I hither. Go, he said,
That Messenger Divine — go on, but speak
The words to Balak that I bid thee utter.

BALAK.

These are the arts approved of priestcraft, that
With feigned delays and doubt success enhanceth,
(*aside,*)

Excusing failure. This must I needs flatter.
Thy God hath bid thee hearken to my call,
So will I not despair of further aid.
What first behoveth to be done, O Prophet ?
What rites, what sacrifice doth He require,

This most high God ? Say, should I come before
Him

With manifold burnt-offerings ? Will the blood
Of thousand rams suffice ; or oil, outpoured
As in ten thousand rivers, please ? Or must
I do, as some have dared, and offer up
My first-born to propitiate His wrath,
And for my soul's sin give my body's fruit ?

BALAAM.

Thou art instructed what is good, O man !
And this thy Maker claims from thee. Obey
His law ; in justice and in mercy rule ;
And walk with humbleness before thy God.
Thus doing, thou shalt prosper. Bring me where
I may behold this wondrous race ; this nation
Without a home, Heaven-led, and desert-fostered.

BALAK.

Abide with us this day ; on Baal's heights
To-morrow shalt thou look upon my foes. [*Exeunt.*]

CHORUS OF MOABITISH WOMEN.

Again lift up the voice of woe ;
With shrieks resounding mourn ;
And bid fresh tears in torrents flow,
For thee, my country, lost, forlorn !
Alas ! as outcasts now we roam
Along each dear, familiar scene ;
Where once arose some cherished home,
Or long-deserted shrine has been.

Ascending Luhith's height we weep,
And going down Horōnaïm ;
On Elealeh's holy steep,
O'er Medeba and Eglāim.
Their towers are fallen, temples void,
Their cornfields wasted, vines destroyed,
And every glory dim.

O, flowery vale of Sibmah, still
For thee my sorrows wake ;
Thy fruitful bowers and vine-clad hill,
Beside the glassy lake ;
Whose purple clusters crushed and torn
Beneath the spoiler's tread,
The poisonous wolf-grape and sharp thorn
Now flourish in their stead.
Thy pleasant streams were filled with blood,
Their blooming banks are pale ;
O might my tears, a bitter flood,
To water them avail.
Ah ! banished far we take our stand,
And gazing towards the lovely land,
Our hearts with anguish fail.

Can we forget the fatal day
When rushing down like torrent's fall,
The Amorite in fierce array,
Strong as the oak, as cedar tall,
Swept onward with resistless force,
Destruction thundering in his course !

From town to desert, hill to plain,
Wild rumour fearful fled amain ;
And fugitives, a trembling band,
Wandered and wailed on Arnon's strand.
Daughters of Moab, wherefore flee,
Like doves unto the hollow rock ?
There must our joyless shelter be
From victor's rage and cruel mock.
But we have seen our mighty foes o'erthrown ;
The wrongs they heaped on us themselves have
known ;
We weep no less, but now fate's equal measure own.

SCENE II. *The heights of Baal.*

Enter a MOABITE and a PRIEST of CHEMOSH.

MOABITE.

Surely, we owe the gods high praise and thanks
For the destruction of our strong invaders,
The ruthless Amorites : for this hath Balak
Summoned from Pethor's vale the seer renowned
Of deepest mysteries ? Tell me, priest of Chemosh,
To whom these seven altar-fires ascend,
If not to Baal, on his sacred mount ?

PRIEST.

Ask me not, son ; but be assured nought good
Can come of this strange worship. Moab scorns
His ancient faith ; but let him look to it—
He shall not thrive.

MOABITE.

Remember how the might

Of Chemosh quailed, when in fierce Moloch's name,
The Amorite came up against us. Shall we
Still reverence him who failed in utmost need !

PRIEST.

Woe 's me, that I have lived to see his shrines
Neglected and despised ! Yet may I live
To mark a worse destruction vindicate
Our fathers' service and your mad revolt.

Enter BALAK, BALAAM, Lords, &c.

BALAK.

Lo, all the sacrifices are complete ;
All things as thou ordainedst. Now, look forth,
O Balaam ; yonder spread the myriad tents
Of Israel ; observe, where, in the midst,
The magic cloud, the secret of their power,
Mysterious rests. Now, if thou art, in truth,
Endued as men believe, hurl down on them
Mortal defiance ; let thy curses blast
From north to south on every side their strength,
And set me free from fears intolerable.

BALAAM.

It is a glorious sight, a terrible !
Yet to my soul no inspiration thence
Ascending, findeth utterance. Let me seek
Some still, retired spot, and there, alone,
Confer with the Invisible.

BALAK.

Higher up,

Within the grove a clear space lies enclosed,
Unseen of aught, save Heaven.

BALAAM.

I go : perchance
The Lord will meet me there. Thou wait meanwhile,
And watch till my return, beside the altars.

[He goes up.]

BALAK.

And this the land—again do I behold .
The happy seat where once I ruled in peace !
O mount of Baal ! many a weary day
Hath dragged its course, since last thy steep I
climbed,
With unavailing sacrifice and prayer.
Since then, how changed ! vanquished and fugitive,
By horror and confusion driven, we sought
O'er Arnon's fords unenvied refuge far.
O beauteous prospect, wide-extending plains,
Ye wood-crowned heights, ye sacred groves, ye
bowers
Wherein we dwelt in plenteous ease and joy,
How doth your sight renew the agonies
That travailed for your loss ! Beneath my feet,
On every side behold, in ruin laid
My cities, once so populous and fair.
Here Medeba, deserted and forlorn ;
And thou, O Heshbon, crown of Moab's pride !
No more may I re-enter ye, no more

Build up your palaces, your towers repair ;
With shame relinquished to this alien swarm,
Their conquest and their heritage for ever ?
Not so !—forbid it, spirits of our fathers,
Whose bones unhonoured brook the strangers' tread.
Not—if by human art, since force hath failed,—
If there be aid from demon or from God—
Tho' baffled I persist. Descend, O Syrian !
Thy mission speed—I see thy spreading skirts.—
Make haste.

Enter BALAAM.

LORD.

The spirit is upon him !

BALAK.

Silence !

He is about to speak.

BALAAM.

From Aram, from the mountains of the east,
Hath Balak called me forth.

The king of Moab spake :

Come, curse for me the sons of Jacob ; come,
On Israel send defiance from the Lord.

How shall I curse whom God hath blessed ?
How speak defiance when he confirmeth peace ?

Lo, from these rocky heights,
And wide o'er-seeing hills,
I gaze upon his far-extended might :
Lo, this race shall dwell alone,
Unnumbered with all nations else,

Countless as dust, who Israel's hosts may tell?
Fain would my soul go down to death like him,
And seek its end in righteousness and prayer.

BALAK.

What dost thou, man of God? I bade thee curse
My foes; behold, thou pourest blessings on them.
Speak; answer me! Recall thy raptured spirit.

BALAAM.

Be not amazed, great king. Have I not said it?
The words the Lord hath given me must I speak.

BALAK.

Ev'n so? I thought thee wise and powerful.
Hast thou no charm to move, no incantation
Wherewith to invoke thy God and wrest from him
A favourable reply?

BALAAM.

Am I more strong
Than Him I serve?

BALAK.

Yet persevere once more;
On Pisgah's holy heights a space stands free
From forest trees—a consecrated spot;
Thence may thine eye behold the extreme ends
Of Israel's camp; perchance thine imprecation
May be permitted there.

BALAAM.

Is God a man,
That he should falsely swear? Or like the sons
Of men repent what He hath willed? Attend
Unto my words, O son of Zippor; know,

What the Omnipotent hath spoke, no purpose
Of man can set aside. Yet may'st thou please Him ;
And acceptable worship hath done much. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *Another part of the hills of Abarim.*

Enter ZURIEL.

ZURIEL.

I've wandered farther than I meant, and lost
All trace of our encampment ; but these hills
On every height afford an ample view
Of the surrounding plains, and every cave
A traveller's couch. This is a goodly land ;
And Nature, in her wild luxuriance,
Scarce heeds war's ravages or man's neglect,
But lovelier ev'n in desolateness shows.
She should be thankful when our mutual hates
Free her more innocent progeny from the wrong
Of human domination. I, in vain,
Flee from that yoke, who ever bear within
The strife of thought, and sateless, fierce desires.
This earth is all too narrow for their scope—
This life too brief. Is man but dust, whose breath
One moment may extinguish ? then, I feel
A spirit not human hath possession here,
Whether for good or evil. But who comes ?
A welcome check to fruitless meditation.

(*Enter ZUR, PRINCE OF MIDIAN, Attendants.*)

ZUR.

On Baal's heights the mouldering fires are spent,
And Balak with his nobles elsewhere seeks

Propitious answer to fresh invocations.
O stranger, if thou canst, inform our steps
To find what way he went.

ZURIEL.

I know not, friends,
Of whom ye speak ; so much am I a stranger.

PRINCE.

No son of Moab, by thy speech, art thou.

ZURIEL.

True ; thou beholdest one of Israel's race.

PRINCE.

Such have I most desired to see ; but thou
Art of no giant frame, no wondrous mien,
Surpassing mortal use ; yet, as I deem,
In rashness eminent, venturing here alone,
Unguarded, on an adversary's ground.

ZURIEL.

I fear no danger, not intending wrong ;
Yet am not unprepared, whate'er befall.

PRINCE.

Is it no wrong, thus, as a spy to explore
The land thou hast destroyed ?

ZURIEL.

How as a spy,
Where we possess the whole ? Is Moab mad,
That he should rage 'gainst those who have revenged
His injuries and defeat ? We are his friends ;
We spoil his spoilers and molest not him.

ATTENDANT.

A messenger from Balak.

Enter Messenger.

MESSENGER.

Hail, O chief

Of Midian's princes ! Moab sends thee greeting.

PRINCE.

Where tarrieth your king ?

MESSENGER.

He tarries not ;

But from the field of Zophim in fierce anger

Hasteneth, for there the Aramean sage

This second time hath blessings prophesied

On those he came to curse.

PRINCE.

Of this no more ;

But lead where we may meet him.

MESSENGER.

Who is he,

That youth with gloomy brow and eye of fire ?

PRINCE.

He is of your invaders ; since you own

The hand of war and voice of Heaven alike

Declare for them, 'twere wisest to entreat him

With favour and good-will. Adventurous youth,

If without guile or enmity among

Our people thou wouldst sojourn, come with me,

Of hospitality assured.

ZURIEL.

Be it so.

Each man I count a friend, till proved a foe.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *Mount Peor.*

Enter BALAK, BALAAM, PRINCE OF MIDIAN, etc.

BALAK.

Twice hast thou blest my foes ; from Baal's height
Once, and again on Pisgah's sacred mount.

Thou saidst this people bore no brand of guilt ;
That sorcery nor false worship in their camp,
Nor was rebellion found ; therefore their God
Crowneth their wars with victory ; but now,
Lo, a third time I bring thee where seven fires
Of sacrifice on Peor's summit rise.

Look o'er the wilderness, whence first they came
Like some wide pestilence — say, have they done
nought

In all their wanderings might call down vengeance
From the great Deity who thus protects them ?

PRINCE OF MIDIAN.

He answers not — his eyes are on the waste —
How dreadful is their gaze ! his form dilates ;
His locks stream upward. Is it the word divine
Upheaves his labouring breast ?

BALAK.

He speaks !

BALAAM.

Thus sayeth Balaam, son of Beor ;

Thus saith the man whose undimmed eye
Hath looked into eternity ;

He, who hath heard the Almighty's voice,
And seen His visions dread,
Though sunk in trance to mortal view,
With spirit clear ; he saith :
O tents of Jacob, how divine
Thy tabernacles show !
As verdant valleys they spread forth,
As gardens by some river fair,
Or cedars near the flood ;
Like fragrant aloes, planted by the Lord
In Paradise, your goodly banners stand.

Like gathering torrents shall he sweep,
And as ocean's many waters
His seed shall be diffused afar.
From Egypt hath Jehovah led him ;
The wild bull's strength is in his limbs ;
He shall devour the nations in his might ;
Their flesh with arrows pierce, and grind their bones
to dust.

Lo, in his lair he lies,
A lion fierce and strong ;
And who shall dare arouse his sleeping rage ?
O Israel, blest are all who shall bless thee ;
And those accurst who curses on thee fling.

BALAK.

Magician, hold ! this third time dost thou mock me
With adverse oracles ? Have I not sent for thee
To curse mine enemies ? Dost thou set at nought

The anger of a king ? But get thee hence !
I would have heaped all wealth and greatness on
thee —

The God thou servest cuts thee off from honour ;
Seek recompense from Him.

BALAAM.

O son of Zippor,
Rebuke me not ; I have dealt justly with thee.
Did I not make thy messengers reply, —
Should Balak offer mines of unmixed gold,
I cannot speak, but as my Lord appoints me ?
And now give ear, and I will show to thee,
(When to my father's house my steps I bend)
What shall befall ; yea, I will counsel thee
How in remotest times, before this race
Thy people must bow down.

BALAK.

Forbear ! ah me !
Again the fires of inspiration blaze
From his fixed eye. No more, O man of God !

PRINCE OF MIDIAN.

The irresistible torrent bursteth forth —
He speaks.

BALAAM.

Again lift up the voice
Of prophecy, my soul ;
Thou who hast heard the Almighty's words,
And seen His visions dread.
Not now, not near, that hour !
Far in the future's depths I see

The coming of his might.
From Israel shall a Star shine forth,
A mighty Sceptre rise,
And smite the crown of Moab's pride,
And all the sons of turbulence destroy ;
O'er Idumæa shall his hosts prevail,
And Seir beneath their valour bow ;
Yea, out of Jacob shall the Ruler come,
Whose everlasting sway no power may stand before.

O Amalek, unto thy land I turn ;
Thou, once the first of nations ! but thine end
Must be to perish in eternal night.

Ye Kenites, strong your fortresses, who dwell
Within th' enduring rock ;
Yet desolate and wasted shall they be,
Till by th' Assyrian borne away,
Captivity the Kenite's doom fulfil.

PRINCE OF MIDIAN.

Well may'st thou pause, O Prophet, and bow down
Thine head in anguish, at the dire array
Of evils, by thy prescience evoked.

BALAAM.

Woe, woe, alas !
What man may live, with whom God dealeth thus ?
From islands of the west
Against th' Assyrian shall ships go up ;

And against him who dwells beyond the flood :
He, too, must perish in eternal night.

[*Exit BALAAM.*]

PRINCE OF MIDIAN.

He is gone. Th' awe-stricken atmosphere
Is loosed from his tremendous presence, and gives
Us leave to breathe again.

BALAK.

The man is mad :
And we but fools, whose judgment crouched beneath
The ravings of his frenzy. From henceforth,
I trust my sword and proper wisdom rather.

[*Exeunt BALAK and Attendants.*]

PRINCE OF MIDIAN.

Madness and inspiration have been deemed
Of nearest kin ; but in this soothsayer
Much knowledge with deep counsel doth appear,
Which may prove serviceable. I'll entreat him
To turn his homeward steps and be my guest.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I. *The Israelite Encampment.*

Enter JOHANAN and a LEVITE.

JOHANAN.

I like it not ; it is against the course
Of ancient custom and what reason teaches,

That woman, born to serve, should obtain rule
And independent heritage among us.

LEVITE.

Th' inspired decree hath sanctioned and confirmed
It thus ; the daughters of Zelophehad
Establishing in their claimed rights, to keep
Their father's name remembered in the land.
And thou, Johanan, sharest in their gain,
Whose sons shall wed your kinswomen endowed
With rich possessions.

JOHANAN.

Rather would I choose
They wedded them undowered. A wealthy wife,
With pride and self-will in her train, may bring
Contention worse than penury. Lo, there,
With brows all garlanded they come, attended,
As on a triumph, by a giddy troop
Of maidens to their tent.

LEVITE.

A lovely sight.
Mahala leads them with demure regard,
And stately gentleness ; next, Thirza moves,
Whose fawn-like shyness veils a spirit sublime ;
The rest how innocent and gay ! I deem not
Aught evil mingleth in their licensed joy.

Enter MAHALA and THIRZA.

MAHALA.

Our gracious kinsman, we entreat thy blessing
On our new granted portion.

JOHANAN.

It is yours.

Yet strangely sounds your daring ; yea the sight
Scarce maidenly, methought, when Mahala
Unveiled before the tabernacle stood,
In face of all the congregation met,
With audible voice her privilege to assert.
I marvelled whence that much-admired assurance
Your modesty had borrowed.

MAHALA.

I did fear ;

But Thirza taught me what to say, and armed
With fortitude that fits a righteous cause.

JOHANAN.

So had I judged. No longer I address thee,
Thirza, with old authority ; yet hear
Some words of solemn admonition from
Thy father's brother. Now, sole power is thine
How to bestow thyself and heritage
As choice directs, so be it in our tribe ;
Which doing well or evilly thou shalt answer
To Him who gave the trust. Of Israel's youth
Full many have in foul idolatry
Forgot Jehovah's law ; and know, that Zuriel
Ev'n now abideth with the Midianites,
And joins their festivals profane.

THIRZA.

O sir ;

Wrong not the absent with surmise.—

JOHANAN.

I mean not ;
But thine own heart examine, and take heed
What holds ascendance there.

LEVITE.

Enough, my friend :
Thou hast touched on solemn woe ; our elders meet,
Consulting how this grave defection best
May find prevention.— Let us not be absent.

JOHANAN.

I am ready.

[*Ereunt JOHANAN and LEVITE.*]

THIRZA.

Such his pleasure still ;
To rend the heart he can no more interpret
Than gaze on yonder sun and note his beams.

MAHALA.

Yet, sweetest sister, I must also dread
Thy love for one, of such wild wayward passions,
And semblance dark as night.

THIRZA.

You know him not.
As I beneath a sunny aspect bear
Sadness that shrinks from common scrutiny,
So he with darker brow delights to hide
Intents all-glorious, tenderness and truth.

MAHALA.

Thus love adorns him well with stolen hues
From thine own fancy's bright, exhaustless store.

THIRZA.

We met as wanderers from some far-off shore
In hopeless exile meet.—With rapture they
Drink in their native speech, and hang once more
On accents glad of long-lost home, recalling
All dear, familiar memories ; so, our minds
That long had walked without intelligence
As aliens among men, though diverse, each
Found kindred, sweet communion, interchange
For unaccompanied, self-consuming thought.
And Oh, to be bereft—again forlorn
In this world's strife ! Dear sister, do not shape
A doom so heavy for mine aching breast.

SCENE II. *The dwelling of the Prince of Midian.*

Enter BALAAM and ZUR.

PRINCE.

O son of Beor, all things have I done
According to thy words. The Israelites
Hearken unto our friendly voice, and pour
In multitudes our festivals to share,
And nothing loath their mystic orgies join.

BALAAM.

So far is well. If thus they should provoke
The wrath of the Omnipotent Deity,
Fallen is their might ; He shall deliver them
Into your hands ; or otherwise, you bend
Ev'n their prosperity to do you service,
No longer your invaders, being your guests,

The daughters of your land are fair, more free
Than the veiled maidens of their camp ; by them
Shall you make sure the bonds of fast alliance
With these proud strangers. Two of nobler mien,
As chief among the rest, I marked.

PRINCE.

The one

The wanderer whom I met with on Abarim.
Zimri they call the other.

BALAAM.

He is proud,

Impetuous, rash, the ready instrument
Of weightier heads' devices ; but the first,
Thoughtful, reserved, yet bearing on his brow
The trace of passions unextinguishable,
Whose calm is treachery—he too, unless
Errs mine experience, by this mastery
Of fancy and the senses, shall, though strong,
Be to our projects bound.

PRINCE.

With gaze intent

He seemed of all observant, pleased with nought.

BALAAM.

His is no vulgar taste, and fixed, unerring,
On that thou hast most perfect—the rare beauty
Of Meetabel thy daughter.

PRINCE.

Are we secure

Thus far to mix with this mysterious race ?

The sons of Moab many a wondrous tale
Of their wise ruler's prescience relate.
One, that he owns a magic cup, a gem
Of price inestimable, within whose rim
He views revealed whatever, far or near,
His people do and enemies contrive.

BALAAM.

Be satisfied ; he hath no power but that
Which Heaven accords, the hire of obedience.

PRINCE.

Well ; in thy deeper wisdom I have placed
My confidence and hope. The festal board
Demands my presence. [Exit.

BALAAM.

So the arm of flesh
May triumph over faith. This Midianite
Troubleth his mind not much with auguries.
Wiser in this than Balak, whose coarse sense
Refuseth credence to Eternal Truth,
Yet clingeth to gross terror and vague hopes ;
Abject, and yet irreverent in his creed.
But I, who scorn these potentates, scarce dare
To turn an inward eye on mine own deeds.
Their very ignorance doth upbraid my guilt,
If knowingly I set myself against
The course of righteousness and Heaven's decree.
Yet, how ? I break no law — if those to whom
The law was given, being tempted, turn
To disobedience, this condemns me not,

Names diverse, and strange attributes, wherewith
To invest and circumscribe Divinity,
Whose presence none escape, none may discern.
Thus, from the reedy banks of Sihor brought,
In Peor's temple they observe the feasts
Of ancient Orus ; and the dog-faced god
Of Memphis holds his shrine on Nebo's mount ;
But the far planets are esteemed their home.
Nor they refuse with hideous rites to serve
The blood-stained King, whom Ammon's sons exalt,
Nor all whom neighbouring tribes adore as Lords,
Dispensers of their doom.

ZURIEL.

If rightly we
These massive remnants scan, that earlier race
Nobler conceptions must have fired to raise
A temple scarce unworthy Deity,
Co-eval with earth's mould. Had I not heard
Our fathers tell of Egypt's fabrics huge,
And seen our Idumean brethren shape
The solid rock to glorious masonry,
I could not deem them wrought by mortal power.

BALAAM.

'Tis said that they were giants, and the offspring
Of angels banished heaven, to whose instruction
Some have ascribed all sciences and arts
Whereby the pride of man exulting grows.
But of their sons, the Rephaim, so called,
No notice lives ; yet still their spirits are thought
To linger round these relics of past glory,

Wandering at midnight hour from mountain graves,
Or mighty floods within whose depths they mourn ;
For superstition ev'n from the abyss
Of dull oblivion heighteneth fear and awe.

ZURIEL.

We hold the registers of earthly fate
From man's creation to this hour—the past
Whoso will read may learn ; but for the future !—
Ev'n knowledge makes our ignorance more dark.
With us Jehovah dwells in manifest power ;
Else know we nought save what our priests and elders
Assert of His dread Being.

BALAAM.

How sublime,
Above men's state, is his, who ruleth you
As fame reports, and wields th' Almighty sway,
Conversing face to face with God !

ZURIEL.

If stamped
On mortal lineaments apparent be
Its proof, I will believe it. None may look
On Moses but with more than reverence ; none
But love him while they fear. In majesty
Not human, yet the meekest man on earth ;
No exultation from his greatness springs,
But sorrow and much care how to conduct
A people headstrong, foolish and perverse,
Unapt to govern, greedy of all base,
Blind superstitions and idolatry,
That cannot seem too monstrous if presented

In a forbidden shape. Tell me, for thou
Hast deeply studied, how it is, the many
Choose ever for their worship some most vile
Or insignificant object—ox or reptile,
Insect or lifeless stone? If we must serve,
Surely free-will should bow in preference to
The excellent and great.

BALAAM.

Belike they honour
The principle of evil biding in them.
To seek for truth can lead but to acquaintance
With error's many-faced omnipresence ;
Yet every error may we upward trace
Thro' devious windings, thro' the various stain
Of ignorance and vice to one pure source
Where th' ineffable Mystery sits veiled
From contemplation in eternal glory.
But man, indeed, requires some outward form
Within his senses' scope, and tangible,
Whereon to hang his terrors and affections.
Therefore they found out emblems—first the sun,
Surpassing image of the Deity,
Giver of light and life. Yon gentle moon,
Whose changeful aspect watcheth us so near,
Soon shared his worship ; next, the starry host
Revolving near her orb ; whose courses due
Sabea shepherds told, and gave them names.
With these associate, or as chief, we find
Men famous in their lives because they most
Oppressed or benefited fellow-men.

ZURIEL.

*That hath some savour ; for of all we know
Surely the spirit of man hath most divine.
And what a glorious recompense it were,
After this fleeting breath be spent, to live
Enshrined in reverential memory !*

BALAAM.

So dream the young ; but find that this, too oft,
Sole meed awarded by earth's gratitude,
Is but a mockery, an unreal shadow.
Praise cannot please the ear once closed in dust,
Nor reach the vagrant soul in realms unknown ;
This narrow verge of life includes the whole
We comprehend of sufferance or enjoyment.
But since this anxious being still recoils
From cold annihilation, fancy toils
To frame a second world perfecting this ;
Hence priests and rulers weave their subtlest snares
For fearful souls ; awarding future bliss
To such as best perform their biddings here ;
And with the horrors of eternal anguish
Vex the departing spirit, long o'er-worn
By fleshly ills.

ZURIEL.

In this I most approve
The mercy of our hierarchal rule ;
That doth denounce and swiftly execute
Its temporal chastisements ; but leaves the grave
A refuge sure, inviolate, from life's pangs
When unsupportable found.

BALAAM.

It is a theme
Confounding human thought ! Reason can but
Point out th' inscrutable darkness hung about
The source and termination where this drop,
Called time, doth merge into eternity ;
Her whole collected rays may never pierce
Or dissipate that gloom.

ZURIEL.

Can she do more
Than teach us the perfection of that sorrow
Which compasseth existence ?—to reflect
Is to be full of woe.

BALAAM.

But cherish not
Such woe ; for life, young man, to thee affords
Abundant pleasures ; nor too nicely weigh
The balance, but enjoy the proffered good.
But see, from yonder grove where issues forth
A shining troop of maidens—they approach.

ZURIEL.

How gracefully their white robes glance amid
The dusky foliage !—what do they here ?

BALAAM.

Doubtless, with hymns and dance to celebrate
Their Ashtaroth's ascendance. These should be
The daughters of our princely host.

ZURIEL.

Ha ! Meetabel—
Brightest perfection, sure, that ever beamed

On mortal view. How like the queen of night !
Her eyes in lustrous blackness far outshine
Yon constellated orbs. Delightful vision,
Whose unexpressive beauty doth inform
The kindling atmosphere with love and rapture !

BALAAM.

We must retire ; but under the deep shade
Of this broad, time-worn pillar, let us mark
In no irreverent mood their ceremonies.

[*They retire.*]

Enter MEETABEL and her NURSE.

MEETABEL.

Here let us wait — my sister and her train
Needlessly linger, scattering odorous flowers
Along the winding path.

NURSE.

Never, my child,
Have I beheld thee with such listless air
Perform thy votive offerings—what may it be ?
Some recent anger — or, what secret wish,
Whose unfulfilment this disquiet brings ?

MEETABEL.

Something there is — I know not what. Might I
Command this hour my heart's desire, I scarce
Could frame an object.

NURSE.

Shall I show thee one ?
The youthful stranger whose dark ardent gaze

On thy sweet aspect found its resting place,
Admiringly enchained.

MEETABEL.

Not so, good nurse.

His eyes were on me, but their absent gaze
Told wandering mind; and yet I could but note
Their melancholy softness — sure, some woe,
Or unforgetful loss hath cast its gloom
On his fair morn of youth: and when he spoke,
How plaintive were his tones! it seemed like one
Who pleadeth with his destiny perverse.

NURSE.

Beware, lest ill-advised pity steal
Thy bosom's peace, nought profiting to him.
For disappointment's canker having preyed
So deep into life's bud, receives no cure
From the chance sun-beam of a passing favour;
Or if some inborn taint of blood induce
That objectless dejection, turn away
As from a fatal blight, beneath whose touch
Each tender thing must perish.

MEETABEL.

Be content;

I think not of him. See, our friends are come.

Enter COZBI and others.

NURSE.

Maidens, it is the hour; behold, on high
Yon crescent orb her full ascendance gains.
Begin your chant, and may your voices rise
Well-pleasing to the sovereign of the skies!

The Hymn.

Earth is still ; with weary load
Of toil and strife no more oppress,
She smiles serene, the calm abode
Of sleep and ever-grateful rest.
Now from his empyreal throne
The lord of light and motion gone,
Unshared dominion thou dost own,
O Ashtarothe ! O Crescent-browed !
In cypress grove thy shrine we rear,
Whose sacred glooms from envious glare
Of day unhallowed, softly shroud.
There, by Assyrian maidens taught,
Our bloodless offerings, pure, we brought,
With odoriferous gums and blossoms strewed,
The harvest's store and brown bee's golden food.

Mighty Mother, unrevealed,
By whose mysterious influence sealed,
This universal being springs,
First source of all created things !
Ere earth awoke from primal sleep,
Thy smile was on the watery deep,
And from its bosom called to light
Love, the controller, love divine,
Whose secret energies combine
Opposing powers of Nature right.
On lotus-flower above the tide
The Form serene was said to glide,

Blending the elements of strife
To harmony and new-born life.
O Mother, from thy veil unlifted, bend !
Grant that love's blessing on our prayers attend !

The stars are rolling, keenly bright,
Around thy throne their orbs of light ;
Not hid from view of gifted seers,
The Spirit dread of each appears ;
Each one guides in calm profound
His course along th' ethereal bound ;
With solemn brow and changeless eye
Each rules some mortal destiny :
O Ashtaroth, whose sovereign sway
Their everlasting powers obey,
Bid them with mild, benignant aspect burn,
And far from Midian's plains all evil influence
turn !

Thus we salute thee, Queen of heaven, supreme !
And now farewell, and o'er our quiet slumbers
beam.

[*Exeunt MEETABEL, &c.*

ZURIEL comes forward,—afterwards BALAAM.

ZURIEL.

Have I been wrapt in sweet oblivious dream,
My soul transporting to the golden bowers
Of Eden, once our own ? The trembling air,
Filled with the breath of incense and of song,

Sighs for departing bliss ; and silence folds
The fond remembrance in her tranquil breast,
Sacred to joy unmeasured, unexpressed.

[*Exit.*

BALAAM.

I might have spared discourse and frigid counsel,
By more alluring teachers put so soon
To silence. Such is life ; in its fresh spring
Awake to every impulse, plumed to soar
Above the sphere of harsh, repining cares,
Ne'er by reflection's prematurest growth
Entirely obscured. Yea, happy thus,
Jocund and free its midway race half run,
To plunge in th' unexplored abyss of death.
While age reluctant, to the sure event
With backward-longing gaze drags slowly on :
For wisdom hath small increase, though expire
The flames that made her lamp so coldly beam ;
We turn to graver trifles, heavier toils,
And to repentance yield time's richest spoils.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Before the Tents of the Daughters of*
ZELO.

Enter JOHANAN and THIRZA.

THIRZA.

Johanán, at thy bidding am I come
Without our tents. O hast thou any comfort

For this dark scene of horror and distress ?
Whence comes the fatal pestilence that fills
The lurid air with stifling vapours, stops
The struggling breath, and fells with sudden stroke
Both youth and age, and innocence with guilt ?
Where will it end ? or how appease Heaven's
wrath ?

JOHANAN.

Murmur not, maiden, at the chastisement
Our sins full justly merit. Numbered are
My days, and few ; for never may our tribes
Enter yon promised land before us spread,
Till the grave close o'er every man who passed
The Red-sea's parting gulf ; so spake the Lord,
When in the wilderness our hearts rebelled.
Aaron is gone, and Miriam, and he,
Our holy prophet — he must also close
His eyes on living light, before that hour.
Yet hasten it, Jehovah ! and ne'er may
My soul arraign Thy justice, or repine
At Thy disposing power !

THIRZA.

Alas ! that ever
Such madness reigns in man ? Can there be found
Who dare against conviction, and forsake
God's perfect law to worship stocks and stones ?

JOHANAN.

Unhappy child ! thou little knowest. But say ;—
Consider well ; hast thou no cherished, deep
Idolatry that in thy heart divides

The faith thy God requires ? O pluck it forth !
For what was late infirmity, becomes
A deadly sin.

THIRZA.

Proceed — O speak !
The son of Omri ? — what of him ?

JOHANAN.

Of him,
Zuriel, I speak : he is denounced as chief
Of Baal's worshippers.

THIRZA.

No, no — not so —
He who scarce bowed his pride to the Supreme,—
He stoop to vile device of human hands ?
It cannot be — thou art deceived.—

JOHANAN.

Thy wisdom
Doubtless excels ; but hear, moreover, how
This prized friend dealeth with thee. He is bound
With Zimri, son of Salu, both to wed
The daughters of a Midianitish prince,
Renowned for matchless beauty. Now then, choose
Whether, forsaking home, thy God, thy people,
Thou with th' idolatress wilt crave to share
A traitor's lot ; or else, root out all trace
Of this misplaced affection from thy breast.

THIRZA.

Hear me, Johanan ; I am calm. — Behold,
The Lord hath made me free to will or do ;
And thou, bear witness for me ; hear the vow

By which I dedicate myself hereafter
To His sole service. Henceforth from the world
Apart and severed do I dwell ; no word
Of marriage or of earthly ties be spoken
To me for evermore.

JOHANAN.

What dost thou ? ah !

Too rash, — thou know'st not what ; by this stern

VOW

Cut off from every joy of life ; thy name
Must perish with thee — thou hast no more part,
Now, in the Hope of Israel.

THIRZA.

My Hope

Shall never perish. But 'tis done. O Lord,
Refuse me not — O make me less unworthy :
And sanctify my spirit to Thy cause !

JOHANAN.

This comes of liberty without discretion,
Yet may it be amended. I will go
Consult our elders — else, tho' rashly done,
May He accept the sacrifice. [Exit.

THIRZA.

Now, now I am alone ; — now let me mourn,
And unreprieved my misery declare ;
Oh, that I might, to distant deserts borne,
Shriek out mine anguish to the vacant air,
And bid their rocks re-echo my despair ;
Or in some rifted mountain's sunless chasm
Hide from unpitying eyes my frenzy's spasm !

O, bursting heart, be still !

I rave—and my rebellious sorrow cries

Against th' Almighty will.

O Holiest, pardon me ! forsake not now —

A broken and a contrite spirit Thou

Wilt not despise.

And art not Thou my Father ? I have none

In earth or heaven to aid, but Thou alone.

Look down in mercy—take me to Thy rest ;

And calm the tumults of my tortured breast.

But ah ! for thee—false friend and cruel foe,

May prayers or tears avail ? Yet, art thou so ?

O ever generous, ever gentle, how

Could treachery lurk beneath that lofty brow ?

Or did my heart the glorious idol frame—

Its fond creation worship in thy name ?

But thou art gone ! and never, never more,

Thy voice, thy look, may lingering time restore.

From memory's clasp thine image must be torn ;

No more permitted o'er thy doom to mourn—

A loveless, joyless, hopeless path I tread,

My bourne the grave,—my rest among the quiet
dead.

Enter ZURIEL.

ZURIEL.

My Thirza, how must I regret the fault

That made me absent in this hour of sorrow !

But thou art safe—O dearest, speak to me !

Thou turn'st away—ah ! why this mute despair ?

THIRZA.

Zuriel, oh, come not near !—thou comest too late.
There is a gulf between us.

ZURIEL.

How ! my soul,
What gulf can part me from thee ? Wilt thou thus
Torture me ? Say—what hath befallen ?

THIRZA.

Oh ! thou hast not
Bowed down to Baal ?

ZURIEL.

I, to Baal bow ?
To senseless stocks ? Thirza ! and can it be
Thou knowest so ill the heart that is thine own ?

THIRZA.

If thou art true, I am indeed unworthy
So dear a trust.—Forgive, forgive the wrong !
I listened to the slanderous report
That branded thee as false to Heaven—to me.
Nay, do not speak—the worst remains to tell—
O hate me not ! but pity and forget—
For I with solemn vow irrefragable,
Have pledged myself to God, and evermore
Renounced discourse with man until I die.

ZURIEL.

Me miserable ! I only am to blame,
Who left thee in the toils of fools and slaves.
Curse on their bigot hate ! But O, my love,
Thou shalt not be their victim. No ; will God
Accept what error offered ? No ; thy bond

Was unallowed and void. The high priest shall—
He must absolve such vow.

THIRZA.

Alas ! he cannot.

ZURIEL.

Thirza, I never sought to bind thy soul
With solemn compact, sealed by name divine,
Or superstitious rite ; but if the faith
Of early love, sweet counsels shared together ;
If long devotion of each word, each thought
To thy direction—still, with patient hope,
Brooking imposed delay ; if these may claim
Remembrance or reward,—then art thou mine,
By ties beyond the reach of words to sever.
Oh, listen—if not here, in other lands
We may be happy ! Leave these tents and seek
With me in blest Arabia's spicy bowers
A home of liberty and love. What needs
Or priest, or ark, or visible sign of awe ?
We 'll worship there as our forefathers did,
Beneath th' uncircumscribed vault of Heaven.
Thou wilt ?

THIRZA.

Ah ! urge me not—'tis madness, sin—
I dare not hear thee—do not grieve my soul
With unpermitted hopes, but let us part.

ZURIEL.

Part ! thou art cold, and wondrous calm, and I
But mad to feel it thus ! Detested folly,
Most blinding fears — whence that once-matchless
spirit

Is tamed to frozen faithlessness ! but know,
That I my right forego not ;—thou hadst none,
Me, causeless, to bereave ; nor hast the power
To evade the enforcement—this thy vaunted law
Permitting, grants thy feebler sex redress,
But in submission. Thirza ! pardon me !—
Wretch that I am ! What demon prompts such
words ?

Look not upon me with that speechless horror—
I worship thee—my soul is in thine hand—
Nor even in madness could one thought contrive
Of injury to thee. Leave me not thus !—
Without one parting word—

THIRZA.

Oh, most unhappy !

Think on thy safety—even now the sword
Of wrath trembleth above.

ZURIEL.

Let it descend.

In full career of hope and exultation
I never yet have shunned the stroke ; and now !—
Betrayed by thee—to endless anguish left—
The thunders of the Almighty arm were welcome,
As my despair's sole term.

THIRZA.

Hear him not, Heaven !

On me, alone, descend the pain ; and let
The misery I have chosen all suffice.
But thou art free — the universe of joy
Before thee spreads, all excellence combining,

As chief among earth's chiefest race, thy God
Hath marked thee out for honour. O reconcile
Thyself with Him—and crown thy father's house.

ZURIEL.

Never; I here renounce my race, my home,
Inheritance or birth-right; and with these
The covenant by whose enslaving curse
The Deity hath stamped them for destruction.
I too can prophesy; and read the signs
That ratify their doom — whose human nature
Cannot support immortal destinations.
Their yoke shall prove too heavy — they shall turn
Perpetually to evil, and incurring
Repeated chastisement, again rebel;
Till the full blast of disobedience pour
On their devoted heads — captive, cast out
To utter misery — trodden under foot,
Wanderers o'er all the earth, without a home,
A wonder, an abhorrence unto men.
Their sky shall glare above as molten brass;
The thankless soil like iron spread below;
All day their prayer shall be for evening's shade—
All night their longing watch for morning hour.
Nor perish thus — they shall remain for ever
A monument of the Eternal's wrath,
And hopeless insufficiency of man.

THIRZA.

Fearful thy words, that from the future draw
The veil of horror; yet doth peace remain —
His peace, for all His people true of heart.

Oh, that it might be thine! — I can no more —
Speak not, nor follow me! 'twere worse than vain.
Zuriel — farewell, for evermore ! [Exit.

ZURIEL.

O God !

Is this Thy vengeance ?

Shall I grovel here,
Like a crushed worm ? I will arise, and front
Despair, and win it to become my friend,
My guide, my bosom-counsellor. I sold
Fond youth with all its energies to one
Who could not love ; whose cold affections chained
To formal duties, have with cruel stab
Repaid my truth. Accursed were her smiles,
Like meteors in a northern sky that shone,
Mocking my sullen, life-consuming fires.
Accurst the pride of wisdom's soaring flight,
Despising earth-born sufferings that wring tears
Of blood from the stern heart. Henceforth I'll seek
Solace in softer charms — one image bright
Returning to remembrance in this hour,
Steals o'er my harrowed sense with opiate power.
[Exit.

SCENE II. *In the air, above the Israelite Encampment.*

The Angel of Slaughter appears.

ANGEL OF SLAUGHTER.

From my place of repose, beneath the throne
Of Eternal Mercy, I hither come.

For the voice of justice, the mingled moan,
Of the guiltless who fall by the guilty's doom,
Hath summoned me forth on the tempest's breath,
With blood to sweep out the taint of death.
As the lightning's flash from the dark cloud leaping,
My sword from its scabbard gleamed thro' the sky;
As ripe ears of corn when harvest is reaping,
Struck down by its sharp edge the doomed shall lie.

The Angel of Pestilence arises.

ANGEL OF PESTILENCE.

I breathed o'er the camp at still midnight,
And poured from my phial the plague's dread
 blight.
'Twas gathered from charnel-houses dim,
Where corruption's shadows cower;
From the noisome marsh, and the dead sea's brim;
And it sank on the sleepers, body and limb;
On their dreams did wild horror glower.
When morning dawned they were ghastly and
 weak,
Ere noon they lay stiff and cold;
As forest-leaves when the loud blasts shake.
Fast fell both young and old.
When Phineas the priest arose and prayed,
He smote with might, and my arm was stayed
By the sacrifice of sin.
My task is done; my pinions cleave
Air's space; the rest to thee I leave;
Angel of wrath, begin.

[The Angel of Pestilence disappears.]

ANGEL OF SLAUGHTER.

Woe, woe, unhappy people! double woe
Bursts on your death-devoted head;
From wide-gashed wounds the crimson tide must
flow,

Of foul disease's livid hues instead.
For fainting sickness' low expiring sound,
Shall shrieks of frantic terror far rebound;
With unavailing cries for pity, though
A brother's hand deal the remorseless blow.
Strike, strike, ye faithful servants of the Lord!
Destroy from out your tents the sin abhorred;
So shall your arms be strong in battle-field,
And routed foemen to your valour yield.

[*He descends.*]

SCENE III. *On the Borders of the Encampment.*

Enter ZURIEL.

ZURIEL.

I linger still; still rooted to the grave
Of my fallacious hopes; but now I know
Myself its sole artificer — too much
Unworthy of the more than mortal blessings
Might have been mine.— But O fond fool, to seek
Forgetfulness elsewhere! Take from me first
My life, my sense, my being; were I like
This clod inanimate, *that* might be happiness
Compared to what I suffer — this intense
Unsleeping anguish. O Thou great Creator,
Why was I born the irresistible sport

Of passion and blind chance? Was all bestowed —
This ardent faith, intolerance of wrong,
And the unquenchable thirst of excellence,—
But by Thy wrath, and to fulfil Thy vengeance,
And brand me as the mock of scoffing fiends?
Oh, let me know the worst, and see mine end!
Howe'er incurred, my misery is greater
Than mortal thought endures.

Enter an Israelite.

ISRAELITE.

Ah, whither flee
To 'scape destruction? Thou here, son of Omri?
Haste, save thyself—Zimri is slain—the sword
Drawn forth against us all, who were deluded
To worship idol-gods.

ZURIEL.

Such was I not;
Nor have I cause for flight.

ISRAELITE.

Did I not see thee
At the high feast of Peor?

ZURIEL.

I was present.

ISRAELITE.

I dare no longer stay.—O Lord, have mercy—
Have mercy on me, miserable sinner! [*Exit.*]

ZURIEL.

Poor wretch, thou fleest from unavoidable fate,
And bearest with thee shame, remorse, and fears,
That should make its delay a curse. Ha! hark!

The shrieks of hapless victims rend the sky.—
I cannot aid them. Gracious Heaven! must men
Thus do the work of demons on each other?

Enter JOHANAN.

JOHANAN.

There stands the chief offender, him I seek.
Despair and guilt have stamped their seal upon him,
Unconscious yet of his approaching doom.
A stronger arm, with sinews still unshrunk
By age, might pause to set unaided on
The fiercest warrior of his tribe: but I,
Invincible in righteousness, fear not.—
Young man, I have a word with thee.

ZURIEL (*turning*).

Johanán!

JOHANAN.

Draw near; it is a message of import.

ZURIEL.

For me? — I knew not I had left within
The camp one friend who would take thought on me.

JOHANAN.

Nearer; 'tis secret — for thine heart. [*Stabs him.*

ZURIEL.

Ah! murderer —

[*Falls.*

JOHANAN.

Say, rather, executioner of the law,
Divine and just. A rebel, art thou not?
A foul idolater?

ZURIEL.

All-seeing God,

Judge between thee and me ; — Yet do I thank thee.
The heavy band about my heart is loosened,
And with life's ebbing tide flows fast and free.
Now peace descends — and hope, like thine — O
Thirza ——— [Dies.

JOHANAN.

Have I done well ? or doth this new compunction
Reprove mine over-hasty zeal ? I must
Present myself before the tabernacle.
If I have erred in deed, Thou knowest, O Lord,
My will was faithful — make it not my crime.

ACT V.

SCENE I. *The Midianite Encampment.**Enter BALAAM and ZUR.*

BALAAM.

Great Prince of Midian, wherefore doth the gloom
Of discontent upon thy brow affront
These tidings of your adversaries' woes ?
Hath not the event responded to thy wish,
And fallen out as I foretold ? What though
Some mischance or disasters intervened ?—
Such ever check the best projected scheme
In its full progress ; but cannot divert
From the persistent end. Thy people stand

Unscathed and strong, while perish Israel's sons,
Thousands and tens of thousands, by fell plague,
Or mutual slaughter.

PRINCE OF MIDIAN.

Who with joy beholds
The fires he kindled for his foes' destruction
Scorch his own roof? Now I perceive too late,
How evil deeds on their contriver's head
Surely recoil; since by these practices
I mourn my children lost. Cozbi, who fled
To yon pernicious tents of sorcery,
Hath perished miserably, and Meetabel
Languishes like a gathered lily reft
Of light and air. But what the boasted gain?
War must ensue. — Wilt thou affirm its chance
Must in our favour weigh?

BALAAM.

At least, the scale
Hath so inclined; add thereunto your valour,
And the combining prowess of four kings,
To your alliance bound—

PRINCE OF MIDIAN.

But Balak stands
Aloof; so deep his terror at thy verse
'Gainst Moab's fortunes.

BALAAM.

That prophetic vision!
Mysterious, yea, as dread!—who may discern
What mighty destinies that hour revealed?—
What awful import mine unconscious speech?
What star, what sceptre rose before my sight

Making th' eternal future bright? — but clouds
Have intervened — have swept it from my soul —
Uncertain, dim, portentous —

PRINCE OF MIDIAN.

Thou art wrapt
In dreams, and heedest not my words.

BALAAM.

Of Balak—

What boots his absence, whose defeated forces
Were hurtful to your cause? But I, in truth,
Am little skilled in warlike circumstance ;
And having finished my respective task,
This nation to enfeeble, and put strife
Between them and the Lord, I do desire
To bid farewell ; and for my father's house
Departing hence, my days in quiet end.

PRINCE OF MIDIAN.

Wouldst thou desert us ? this I looked not for.
What hath been wanting ? have I not repaid
With royal bounteousness thy doubtful service ?
And in this juncture ? — nay, most reverend sage,
Defection were of evil augury,
And infinite discouragement to our arms.

BALAAM.

My lord, I have said, mine aid avails no further.
Freely 'twas given ; but do not thou offend
Both rites of hospitality and justice,
Thus by unworthy and most fruitless force
Attempting my restraint. Or, rather, fear
Lest by such outrage thou provok'st the Power
Whose delegate I am.

PRINCE OF MIDIAN.

Go ! menace fools

Who read thee not. I do believe thy counsels
Destructive, false and hateful, — doubly charged
With curse on us and whom we sought to injure.
But thou, whate'er the issue, must remain
And share it, as is just—if prosperous,
I grudge thee not fresh heaps of coveted ore
To fill thy soul with pomp and tinsel state :
Nor marvel if thine awe-inspiring words
Affect not me, whose hand contains the power
Sole object of thy worship.

BALAAM.

Boast, proud man !

Since that thou hast, I, lacking, must perforce
Obey thy bidding. Ay, exult, rejoice
In brief authority ! to-morrow's sun
Shall on thy ruin laugh ; shall see thee stretched
A piece of lifeless clay, unfeared, unhonoured,
Food for the vulture and the wild-dog grim.
The vision cometh over me — behold,
An equal doom awaits each sceptred chief ;
Horror and devastation fill the land —
The curse of Moab shall seem light as air,
Compared with Midian's utter overthrow.
They were redeemed by flight, but one red gulf
Yawns to devour thine hapless race and thee.

PRINCE OF MIDIAN.

Prophet of evil ; whose ill-boding voice
Conjures spectres from the black abyss

Of a malevolent heart ; canst thou declare,
Or with keen prescience in the future scan
What fate the coming hour for thee decrees ?

BALAAM.

For me ? my destiny would'st thou inquire ?
Oh ! were it hid for ever from my view,
As unattainable to thine ! Ah me !
In plenitude of agony complete,
No less beyond thy scope and comprehension
Than all that I have lost. Go, range thy hosts ;
Prepare for battle ; meet a warrior's death ;
Thankful to be of such coarse metal moulded
The seven-times heated furnace doth untried
Reject.

PRINCE OF MIDIAN.

Now, by my father's gods, I hold
The meanest follower in my ranks less base
Than one, a sordid slave to what he scorns !
I dare accept my fate ; but mark, whate'er
Befalleth me, thou shalt partake therein. [*Exit.*]

BALAAM.

Great God, for this have I abandoned Thee,
And sold Thy gifts to work iniquity ! [*Exit.*]

SCENE II. *A Grove within the Israelite Encampment.*

THIRZA (*alone*).

The worst is over now, and thou art gone
Where calumny and hate no entrance find ;

Life's feverish dream, the strife of sorrow done,
At last to endless peace, secure, consigned,
Its only port the storm-tossed bark hath won,
Its only bed of rest the tortured mind ;
Farewell, then, oh, farewell !—why do I weep ?
Ah might I share with thee that perfect sleep !

Flow on, my tears, still unforbidden flow ;
No more with bitterness, beloved, to lave
Thy memory dear, but in repentant woe
For wrongs that cleave to thine untimely grave ;
Wrongs that nor cure nor compensation know—
On thee, the too-confiding, tender, brave !—
And but the trusted-one, could none be found
To deal the irremediable wound ?

Alas ! my hovering spirit strives to soar
Above that earth-bound grave ; but, as the bird
Wails round her plundered nest, must still deplore
The unreturning past, and call, unheard,
On him who lingers by its brink no more,
To realms of life from death's domain transferred,—
Within whose shadow ever here we move ;
But once set free, no more its power may prove.

All sin and sorrow are of mortal strain,
And ever on their own existence prey ;
We cannot wrestle with eternal pain ;
The fiercest fire the soonest burns away.

I feel, I feel this anguish not in vain ;
Night's darkest hour leads on the dawn of day.
When worn-out storms their languid pinions close,
How softly nature sinks in calm repose !

Enter MILCAH.

MILCAH.

Thirza — dear sister — do I trouble thee ?
Thou art so much alone ; — but let me stay
Near thee, I will keep still.

THIRZA.

My little one,
Can aught estrange me so, as not to love
Thy gentle presence ? Come ; look not so sad—
I shall not weep again ; I am glad now.

MILCAH.

I too have wept, and thought we never could
Again be happy.

THIRZA.

Sorrow cannot rest

On this young radiant brow. Those eyes whose hue
Reflects heaven's deepest tint—those locks of light,
Unlike earth's common race—do they not tell
Of purer nature, of a strain refined
From passion's darker taint ?—and to my soul
Prefiguring some dream of holiness —
Some formless hope. —

MILCAH.

Am I not most like thee ?

THIRZA.

Dearest, oh, not like me ! not like in fortune —
But happier far be thou ! not like in this
Keen sense that shrinketh ev'n from the shadow
Of an imagined wrong — whose very joy
Still trembled on the verge of agony.
Why do I speak of this ? I would unfold
Something to come, that from thine aspect flows,
Pervading oft my spirit — I have seen
Revealed in lineaments like thine, a form
Divinely human, beaming tenderest love,
Maternal pity, and immortal hope,
Benignant and serene ;—and this is she
Who shall redeem Eve's forfeit, and thro' her
Salvation and atonement shall shine forth
On human misery. Then shall meekness rule,
More powerful than force ; then truth and peace
May meet together — righteousness severe
Sweet mercy shall embrace.—O blessed hour !
Blest in the promise, in fulfilment blest ;
Mine eye hath seen thee, my desire hath found :—
What more can earth afford ? what wish remains,
But to depart and close mine eyes in rest ?

MILCAH.

Where would'st thou go ? Ah, Thirza, wilt thou
leave me,
And all our sisters, all who love thee here ?

THIRZA.

It ever must be so — think that we join
Those who have gone before ; how many more

Than we behold in life. There shall we find
Our father, there, our mother blest, whom thou
Hast never seen ; and there we all shall meet
At last, to part no more.

MILCAH.

But who can tell
How that may be ? It seems so sad to lie
Beneath the cold, dark earth ;—Can life reach there,
Or sight or sound of joy ?

THIRZA.

Ere yet we left
Our childhood's home, the blasted desert drear,
My Milcah, did thy fancy never wing
Its flight in dreams to some imagined scenes
Of what the longed-for, promised land might be,
Blooming and bright—a presage scarce surpassed
By the reality ?

MILCAH.

I remember well—
They seemed so full of fountains and tall palms,
And flowers thickly strewn as sand, or stars
Of midnight sky.

THIRZA.

Ev'n so, in visions oft
My soul hath wandered to celestial bowers,
Unseen beneath the sky. Words cannot speak
The glory of that paradise—the joy,
The holiness that, as with golden light
Purer than sun or moon, illumed the whole
With never-fading beam. And then I knew

This was our future home ; for spirit-shapes
Of those the world hath lost, moved there serene.
There mark'd I Abraham's venerable mien ;
Fair Rachel with her soul-entrancing eye,
And Joseph too, her faultless son, beloved
Alike of God and man ; and many more
In fulness of such bliss divine, that I
Have wept to wake and find myself still bound
By this dark dungeon's chain.

MILCAH.

O let me go

With thee to that delightful land !

THIRZA.

My darling,

Thou knowest that God hath made and placed us
here ;

He only can dispose our future state.
But serve Him still with humbleness and truth,
Patient submission, never-tiring love,
And he hath blest thee, and thou shalt be blest.

MILCAH.

Most blest in having thee, mine own dear sister.—
He will not take thee from us — thou must stay,
And share the bliss permitted also here.
Have I not heard thee say, 'tis happiness
To look upon the smiling face of nature,
And see all things enjoy her common bounty ?
How lovely in this hour ! the soft warm air
Laden with unseen odours, gently fans
Our tear-stained cheeks, as wooing to restore

Their faded hues—Th' acacia's bloom profuse,
And fragrant citron-flowers are scattered round,—
The sweet birds cheerly singing mid their boughs ;
And painted butterflies flit sportive by,
Rejoicing in the sunbeam and the shade.
Do they not call upon thee to be glad
Once more with them ?

THIRZA.

O child ! my heart is sick.
I cannot look upon the laughing sky,
The sun-bright earth—they smite upon my brain,
Quickening to anguish this faint lingering pain
That will not part.—No,—no more joy for me—
No rest but in the silence of the tomb,
And no relief but darkness still and deep.

MILCAH.

Ah me ! how pale she looks—her eyelids close—
Could I but comfort her !

THIRZA.

Dear, do not weep.
My brow is pillowed on thine arm, and now
Aches not so sore. Sing in thy low, sweet tones,
That simple melody wherewith oft-times
I used to cradle thee to slumbers soft.

MILCAH (*sings*).

Come, gentle night !
Haste with thy shadows deep,
And let soft balmy sleep
Our weary eyelids steep,
O gentle night !

Hence, fading light !
Long with day's care o'erworn,
Long of its mirth forlorn,
Fain would we rest till morn ;
Come, then, sweet night !

Thou comest, dear night !
Thy silent dews descend ;
The flowers their faint heads bend.
Still with our slumbers blend
Sweet dreams, O night !

She sleeps ; how very calm, how placid now !
O God, who lov'st thy children, do not let
Her wake again in hopeless grief to mourn !
O pity her, for she is good and kind,
And she hath said,—such wilt not Thou forsake.
Pain seems to linger even in repose
On that transparent brow, whose azure veins
Wander so clear and fine—and on those lips,
Like palest rose-leaf curved.—Oh that my kiss
Might charm all sorrow hence—my dear, dear sister!

[*Scene closes.*]

SCENE III. *A field of battle covered with dead and dying. Moonlight.*

SATAN *enters.*

Well have ye sped my mission, powers of air !
And well hath man performed the tasks ye set.

If hate, contention, slaughter, pain and death
Are of my sway th'accomplishers and sign,
Soon may I boast an universal rule
And empire upon earth. The chosen sons,
The very ministers of Almighty will,
Whom God exalteth for His proper glory,
Gracing with gifts and knowledge above men,
Prefer my bidding and become my tools.
Escap'st thou, Prophet? Did thy heart-strings
quail

At horrid shouts of war and havoc dire?
But even now th' avengers overtake
Thy terror-stricken flight—ev'n now the bolt
Falls, that must end thy conflicts and secure
My triumph and my spoil. My realms of gloom
Wait for thy coming, and with welcome loud
And ready place of eminence shall greet
Thee, guest conspicuous. Ha! mine adversary
Phanuel, who presideth o'er repentance,
And in departing souls awakes desire
To see their Maker's face.

[*The Archangel PHANUEL descends.*



What! art thou come
To wrest from me my sworn slaves, and defraud
Of rights by service sealed. What new injustice
Dost thou prepare? Must I again relinquish,
Defeated by one prayer, the fruit of years
Devoted to my cause!

PHANUEL.

Author of ill,
To rescue erring spirits from thy toils
Mine office is, and glory ; but with justice
To be fulfilled. I know thy baffled malice,
That two, for whom thy subtlest snares were
spread,
Have finished their brief trial, by me conducted,
To wait in patience till th' appointed term.

SATAN.

Ay ; there I lost what had adorned my state,
And well deserved my care. Both would aspire
Above the limits of their mortal sphere ;
In both pride reigned, whereby ev'n angels fall :
And one from his youth up mine impress wore,
In characters of fire ; but let them go—
A prey more prized is mine :—I do defy
Thy power, Phanuel, to wrest him from mine hand.

PHANUEL.

Tempter, nor man nor angel may discern
The judgements that dispose th' eternal future ;
But thou of this be sure ; thy vaunted power
A baseless and delusive shade shall prove,
That, but permitted by the All-Wise and Good,
Exists, an instrument to work His will,
Till the determined time, when evil itself
Must perish, and the universe reflect
No image but of His transcendant glory.
For Him, this man whom thou hast claimed,—this

son

Of favour and perdition,—his course concludes ;
His deeds recorded in the book of doom,
Nor hate nor pity any more hath force
To cancel or increase their debt. Go then,
Bring up thine accusations to the throne
Of everlasting Justice, whose award
Shall in the end confound thee and destroy.

SATAN.

I go, assured of victory ; nor now,
For the last time, shalt thou confess, proud angel,
My might exceeding thine. [Exit.

PHANUEL.

O earth, earth, earth,
Loaded with misery, bound by curse of sin !
The cries of thy distress ascending mingle
With choirs seraphic, and disturb the bliss
Celestial that can never know defeat.
The whole creation groaneth for the hour
Of thy redemption. Peace ! the seed is sown—
The tree of life again shall spring and flourish,
And Heaven and earth in endless love unite.

[*Passing clouds obscure the Moon.*

Enter BALAAM wounded.

BALAAM.

No aid—no shelter ! I can flee no further—
My trembling limbs grow stiff, and, drop by drop,
My heart's blood thickens round the burning
wounds.
Why should I fly ? What more remains to shun ?

The mortal stroke is dealt — death's hand is on
me —

Prepare, my soul, to meet the destined hour
With fortitude approved. O mother earth !
Receive this tortured frame, and let me rest
On thy kind bosom laid—

I cannot die—

Fresh agony renews life's faltering pulse.—
Oh ! mercy—Oh ! for one cool drop to quench
This fiery thirst. O God ! what place is this ?
Whither hath led me my pain-wildered brain ?
Those groans—this blood-stained ground ! I have
returned

To the dread field, where in vain flight I left
The raging battle. Lo ! the moonlight glares
On horrid heaps of slain—on ghastly shapes
Convulsed in death's last struggle.— Ah ! their
blood

Against me cries — myriads of slaughtered souls
Their crimes and their destruction on my head
Impute, and call to righteous Heaven for justice.
O guilt beyond the reach of hope or mercy !
O great Creator ! dare I turn to Thee,
In penitence or prayer ? I dared pervert
Thy knowledge to the furtherance of evil ;
Thy revelations to promote a purpose
Of demons worthy. — Can one death suffice
To compensate a million ? one brief hour
Of suffering expiate infinite offence
Against immortal truth ? — O death ! art thou

But prelude to eternal wrath? frail flesh,
Of clay compounded, art thou but the veil
That from th' imperishable spirit hides
Its final destiny? To stand before
The all-searching Eye—before thy presence, Lord!—
Oh! rather let profound oblivion wrap
My guilt and my despair! Is there no hope?
Grant me one day, one moment to atone.—
Too late! — the last is come — I justly perish.—
[Dies.]

THE QUEEN'S CHOICE.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

EVADNE, QUEEN OF ILLYRIA.
HYLAS, HER COUSIN, PRETENDER TO THE THRONE.
POLYDORE, PRINCE OF MACEDON.
PAUSANIAS, THE QUEEN'S CHIEF COUNSELLOR.
OLYMPIAS, HER GOVERNESS.
DEMETRIUS, THE ILLYRIAN GENERAL.
LEONTES, FRIEND OF HYLAS.
CASSANDER, }
DORACLES, } LORDS.
TIMON, }
ZENOPHILA, DAUGHTER OF PAUSANIAS.
A SOLDIER OF THE ARMY OF HYLAS.
OFFICERS, LADIES, SOLDIERS, ATTENDANTS, ETC.

Scene in Illyria.

THE QUEEN'S CHOICE.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Before the Palace. Guards, etc.*

Enter DORACLES speaking to an Attendant.

DORACLES.

Go, seek the lord Pausanias; say, I bring
An urgent message from the general.

Enter CASSANDER and TIMON.

TIMON.

Hail, Doracles! what tidings from the army?
Is it true you fight to-day?

DORACLES.

It is most certain;
The enemy prepares to leave his camp.—
Within an hour we give him warmer welcome
Than he hath counted on.

CASSANDER.

You speak, young man,
And look to this as some convivial feast.
Carnage and death alone hold revel there;
The bravest are their prey; this day their choice
Resolves our country's doom.

DORACLES.

Nay, noble sir,
Whether I live or fall, fate secret holds ;
But this I know, that victory must be ours,
To crown our tombs in death, or living brows.
Is not our cause more just, our force superior ?
To doubt were dotage.

CASSANDER.

Hylas is no mean foe.

DORACLES.

Nor over-formidable. That he hath led
His army thro' a hostile land, until
Retreat becomes impossible — defeat,
Certain destruction — savours want of skill,
And valour's best accomplisher, discretion.

CASSANDER.

I am glad to hear you say it.

TIMON.

Well, I confess,
Though nothing doubting the result, our state
Might wear a surer aspect, were its sceptre
In a mailed hand. Our lovely queen, methinks,
Is no Thalestris, in the lists to cope
With this young Mars.

DORACLES.

Why, who would have it so ?
Ill do you weigh her merits and our love.
Ten thousand warriors stand in her defence,
Valour and skill at arms who merely prize
As common things, their nature's attribute ;

While from Evadne's lips one smile might these
Fire with immortal daring — from her eyes
One tear embalm death's grim, disgusting image,
Till it seem sweet and most desirable.

TIMON.

A lover's boast.

DORACLES.

A soldier's loyalty !

O Jupiter ! how cold and stagnant turns [Aside.
Men's blood with age.—When will Pausanias come?
And here he is !

(Enter PAUSANIAS.)

My lord, Demetrius bids me
Request the queen's commands before the battle.

PAUSANIAS.

Tell him she will come forth ; from yonder heights
Your gallant deeds to view. She bids him spare
The vanquished when resistance ends, and bring,
If possible, the traitor Hylas living,
Before her throne.

DORACLES.

It shall be done, my lord.
Her hoped-for presence will fresh vigour lend us ;
And quickly may she see the rebels routed,
Slain or in bonds.

PAUSANIAS.

Where fights Prince Polydore ?

DORACLES.

Upon the left his Macedonian guards
Their station hold.

PAUSANIAS.

Well, may success attend you!

And hear me, Doracles, amid the roar
And stir of battle, somewhat bear in mind
Another heart must bleed with thine; be thou
Brave without rashness — firm, not desperate.

DORACLES.

O my best father! thou hast conjured up
Thoughts would unman me quite; but, should I
fall,

Tell my Zenophila—

PAUSANIAS.

No more. Farewell!

[*Exit* DORACLES.]

CASSANDER.

A gallant youth!

PAUSANIAS.

He hath a son's place in my heart, and shortly,
If Fate forbid it not, may claim the title.

CASSANDER.

For your fair daughter's sake we wish him well.
Do you attend the queen to the field?

PAUSANIAS.

I do.

CASSANDER.

And we both wait her here. My lord, you knew
This Hylas formerly?

PAUSANIAS.

He was brought up
Beneath mine eye, in my good master's time;

Who next to his own grandchild tendered him,
And would have made him sweet Evadne's consort,
And sharer in his realm.

CASSANDER.

This have I heard
In part, and can but wonder at the guilt
His history uncoils. — What must he be ?
By what ingratitude, what madness goaded,
Such boundless favour to reject, and lift
An impious hand against his benefactor ?

PAUSANIAS.

His early spring put forth abundant promise
Of all that graces youth, and, ripening, bears
Surpassing harvest, — yet, ever perilled by
A rash, o'er-heated humour, which, well-ordered,
Might quicken to perfection ; but run wild,
This goodly prospect made a blot to nature.
Flatterers (who still swarm in the brightest ray)
Soon whispered that his sovereign's seeming bounties
Were but half Hylas' due ; and reasoned thus :
Except the princess, then a lovely child,
Sole scion of Evander's house, he was
Last of the royal lineage, — so, more meet
To wear the crown an old man's doting fondness
Would place upon a maiden's baby brow.
This poison gradually sucked in, infected
His every word and act with discontent
And sullen scorn ; till the good king perceiving,
Reproved, and widened thus the breach betwixt
them.

Retiring straight from court, th' impatient youth
Betook himself to travel, and of late,
Hath in Albania, on his own domains
Abode.

CASSANDER.

And now the venerable head
Is laid in dust, that here so long bore rule,
Thinks he to wrest from his defenceless heir
A powerless sceptre ?

PAUSANIAS.

Would that Evadne's state
Were apprehensive of no further danger
Than now affronts our arms !

CASSANDER.

How, worthy lord ?
Who ever reigned in happiness more eminent,
Girt round with love, nay worship so complete ?

PAUSANIAS.

Alas, my friend, this ardent homage hides
The root of future ill. Each fiery chief,
The bulwark and the champion of her throne,
Strives less for fealty's sake, than for possession—
Her hand the coveted prize. Foremost in rank,
Our General, graced with victory this day,
Will stand all-powerful with the army, and
A suitor hardly to be set aside.

CASSANDER.

Demetrius have I marked, designing, bold,
Beneath a blunt and soldier-like exterior,
Not easily loved, but, yet, too often trusted ;

From such, heaven shield our Queen ! The Prince
of Macedon
Might challenge higher favour—smiles she not
On him ?

PAUSANIAS.

As on the rest—her thoughts are free.
Cheerful as innocent, she little notes
What dangers menace her repose. Sweet flower,
Unconscious of the gathering storms, that soon
May scatter its young bloom !

CASSANDER.

You presage from
The darkest auguries—your proper wisdom,
Guiding her inexperience, gives assurance
To brighter hopes.

PAUSANIAS.

Age spareth zeal ; nought else.
Man purposes in vain ; but ye, blest gods,
To your protection take this royal child,
And shadow her from harm !

CASSANDER.

Look ! she comes forth.

Enter EVADNE, OLYMPIAS, etc.

EVADNE.

See, as you bade, my lord, we are prepared,
In festive guise to watch this dreadful game,
Played by men's lives, the stake my crown, my
freedom,

And, you have taught me to believe, the welfare
Of all this realm my fathers left to me.
The morning smiles on us — I am impatient
Till all is ended — let us to the field.

PAUSANIAS.

O dearest Queen, may victory evermore
Make glad your onward path ! yet weareth war
A horrid face to unaccustomed eyes.

EVADNE.

I know it well. My spirit shudders at
What must ensue. It were relief to change
The contemplation for the actual din
And peril of the fray. I would forget
My womanhood to share more equally
The dangers I create.

OLYMPIAS.

Justice forbid !

EVADNE.

Nay, my Olympias, look not so appalled,
I scarce can think my being of such worth
As the respects that fence it in. But hark !
The trumpets sound—that distant shout ! 'tis time.
Bring forth my gallant steed. — Ere evening close,
My bleeding country's wrongs, that vengeance call
Against the arch-traitor, on his head shall fall.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE. II. *Near the Field of Battle.**Enter DORACLES and an Officer.*

DORACLES.

Haste, Glaucus, to the reserve ; bring on the troops.
The day is ours ; but Hylas on the right
Holds out, defying fate. Haste ! let them charge.
[*Shouts.*]

GLAUCUS.

Hark, they shout victory ! Hylas is taken.

DORACLES.

Ha ! I shall be too late. — Hence ! all is done.
[*Exeunt.*]

*Soldiers pass over the stage ; trumpets ; shouts.**Enter DEMETRIUS and Officers.*

DEMETRIUS.

Soldiers, you have done well : no further need
For slaughter or pursuit. The rebel chief
Is captive, and our foes scattered like herds
Before the lion. It is our Queen's command
To spare the vanquished. She in person here
Will thank your service of to-day, and view
The spoils of conquest. Bring your standards,
spread
Your pennons for a canopy, and shout,
Long live Evadne !

[*Shouts ; cries of The Queen !*]

*Enter EVADNE, PAUSANIAS, OLYMPIAS, ZENOPHILA,
etc.*

EVADNE.

Thanks, noble General ! Thanks, my good friends
all.

Poorly must I repay the service ever
I owe your love ; though rich in gratitude,
We may not stain with tears for those who fell
This happy triumph ; but their memory
Shall be immortal *here*, as your desert.

[*Turning to* DEMETRIUS.

I joy to see so many round me, safe,
Unscarred from recent fight ; but for the absent
Trembling inquire.—Where is prince Polydore ?
Where gallant Doracles ?

DEMETRIUS.

They are well, Madam ;
Or with such wounds as grace their new-tried valour,
Needing no balm but from your smiles, they come
To lay their trophies at your feet. So please you,
To sit while in procession are led forth
The vanquished from the field.

EVADNE.

A painful sight,
And full of pity

DEMETRIUS.

It is the custom, Madam ;
And deign to wear around your royal brows
This wreath of victory.

[*The procession passes by.*

EVADNE.

I marvel how th' insurgent General,
Whom fame reports of such fierce haughty soul,
Was ta'en alive, and, as you said, I think,
But slightly hurt.

DEMETRIUS.

To do him scanty justice,
He seemed in love with danger, and to long
For death as 'twere a crown. He might have
'scaped ;
But when his friend who fought beside him fell,
He stood at bay defending him, till, hemmed
Around by multitudes, he was struck down,
Stunned by some heavy missile.

EVADNE.

He did bravely ;
Though sure in a bad cause.

(*Enter POLYDOR and DORACLES.*)

O welcome, noble Prince ! though grieved I see
You bleed in my defence.

POLYDOR.

Dear, sovereign lady,
These drops but blush at their unworthiness
So to appear. Fain would my heart pour forth
Its tide to do you homage.

EVADNE.

Will you wait here,
And see the rest ? You too, Sir Doracles :
But here is one will give you better greeting.

DEMETRIUS.

The prisoners come. [HYLAS, LEONTES and others
pass over the stage.

EVADNE.

Alas! misguided men!
How crushed, how downcast are their looks! But one
Of different mien approaches — is it not? —
It must be — Hylas.

DEMETRIUS.

Gracious Queen, behold
The troubler of your realm is at your feet.

EVADNE.

It is not thus, sir, that we should have met.
[To HYLAS.

HYLAS.

Lady, thou sayest well; but thus hath fate
Determined. I await thine high behest.

ZENOPHILA.

Our gentle Queen is moved. [Aside to DORACLES.

DORACLES.

Curse on the rebel!
He fronts her with the semblance of wronged greatness
Most excellently put on.

HYLAS.

Lead on! are yet
Your dungeons unprepared? Your foresight else
May shame my rashness. [Exeunt HYLAS, etc.

EVADNE.

Pray, my lord, remember
[To Pausanias.

This man, though guilty, comes of royal race.
Let him without indignity be guarded.
We will no longer now detain you, friends, [*rising*.
From needful rest. To-morrow we propose
In every temple thanks and sacrifice
To offer our protecting deities,
For victory vouchsafed. Then will Evadne
Express her grateful love in deeds not words ;
Meanwhile, farewell ! [*Exeunt soldiers and people*.

Haste downwards, setting sun,
And bid benignant darkness o'er yon field
Of blood and horror spread her thickest veil ;
Bringing oblivion to the captive's woe,
And to the tired soldier wished repose.
How many, ah ! in fevered anguish sore
Of cruel wounds must watch, and many weep
Throughout the lingering night, for all they loved,
Who rose this morn in health and exultation,
But never wake again. Bear with my grief ;
" Next to a battle lost, alas ! I see
Nought more to be deplored than victory."

[*Exeunt*.

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Room in the Palace.**Enter POLYDORE and OLYMPIAS.*

POLYDORE.

O good Olympias, teach me by what spell,
What fervent worship, what profound observance,
Might I advance in fair Evadne's grace?
For I perceive from each endeavour past,
No gain but to mine ineffectual flames.—
Cold smiles and words of common courtesy
Their sole reward.

OLYMPIAS.

Have patience, gentle Prince:

The prize you strive for is of countless worth,
Not to be lightly won. I dare affirm
No one stands higher in our lady's favour,
As I believe that none deserve so well.

POLYDORE.

Patience is all my skill; might that prevail,
I'd wait successive ages, though each day
Appear an age. Alas! I have unlearned
To hold account of time—my spirit faints
In her celestial presence, and forgets
To make itself approved. Deceive me not;
Thou know'st thy mistress' thoughts—she deemeth
me
A dreaming dullard she must needs despise!

Why should I hope? Nay! bid me not despair;
For then my whole existence that hath hung
So long on slight expectancy, must cease.
A few short hours ago I might have found
Death in her service—then she would have wept.
If yesterday's disgrace and rout had fallen
Upon her arms—if in these palaces
The traitor revelled, I had then been blest:
I might have hoped.

OLYMPIAS.

What? In Evadne's fall?

POLYDORÉ.

Is not adversity the test of faith?
The torch in noontide burneth dim, but sheds
Safety and light thro' midnight's dreary hours.
Yet, O unthinking wretch! my throne and power
Weigh light against her single, undowered worth.
Then rather die, than even in thought contrive
A bliss expensive of one tear to her!

OLYMPIAS.

I see your passion scorns to stoop its flight
At reason's voice; but I must pray you hence.
I wait here on the Queen; it would displease her
To find me not alone.

POLYDORÉ.

I go; and thou

Befriend me still.

OLYMPIAS.

I do, within due bounds.

But linger not.

POLYDOR.

Alas! compelled to hide
From light and joy, like some ill-omened bird,
I take reluctant flight. [Exit.

Enter EVADNE.

EVADNE.

Olympias, who
Just parted from you?

OLYMPIAS.

Madam, the Prince of Macedon,
He urgeth much to plead his suit before you;
And I do think a truer faith was never
Vowed at the shrine of love.

EVADNE.

I'm sorry for it.
It needs must be a weary weird to waste
In unrequited sighs. — But this is folly —
What man is there that would not feign and flatter
To win a crown? I'm sick on't — I could choose
Ev'n open scorn in preference to such base
And fulsome blandishments, all false and hollow.

OLYMPIAS.

What mean you, dearest lady? Wherefore stain
With sad distemperature this joyful day
Of universal triumph?

EVADNE.

'Twas most tedious.

[After a pause.

Olympias, I must see my cousin.

OLYMPIAS.

Madam !

EVADNE.

Look not so strange on me, O dearest friend :
Where can I turn for counsel or sweet comfort,
If thou deny me ? Am I not thy child ?
An orphan from my birth, thy tender cares
Supplied a mother's loss ; then still be kind,
Be patient with me, for I have much need.

OLYMPIAS.

Most dear — most idolised ! what shall I say ?
What would you have me do ?

EVADNE.

Attend me to
The prison — I will go disguised ; and thou
Shalt with this signet bring us past the guards.

OLYMPIAS.

But for what purpose ? he is stern and rude.
Consider how —

EVADNE.

I have too much considered.
I'll see him, speak with him, and so resolve
Perplexed surmises that confound me now.

OLYMPIAS.

Alas ! if ill ensue, my love in this
Were like the nurse's, who with poison stills
Her wailing child.

EVADNE.

Come, come ! No harm will follow.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The Prison.*

HYLAS.

I've heard that there is fortitude in man
To bear with equal spirit each reverse
Of Fortune's vile inconstancy — if so,
I strangely lack this virtue. Night and day
Have blindly dragged one slow course since my bonds,
And fierce impatience gnaws into my brain
And fills my veins with fire. — A little more,
I shall go mad ! It is a thought like madness,
To stand inactive thus — the powerless slave
Of a weak puny girl. I saw her quail
Beneath mine eye ; ay, in that hour of triumph
She trembled at her conquest, and, methinks,
With better grace would have owned me her lord ;
And as a meek-eyed wife I might have deemed her
Not undeserving honour. But what boots this ?
These chains convict me for a fool, who trusted
In coward hirelings, — a braggart who
Contrives an enterprise, ridiculous
By utter failure. So — at length the sounds
Of jubilee and shouting multitudes
Cease to upbraid my ruin. I'll think no more ;
As hard a couch, and none so undisturbed,
Have I enjoyed. But steps are at the door —
Now welcome ! come what may.

(*Enter EVADNE veiled, OLYMPIAS.*)

She-jailers too !

OLYMPIAS.

My lord, the Queen would speak with you.

HYLAS.

Evadne !

Well, I attend.

EVADNE.

This much concern, I know,
Most fit to feed your scorn ; yet, sir, the experience
Of your implacable enmity cannot
Make me regardless quite that in your veins
The blood my fathers gave me flows — in yours
Alone ; on earth I have none other kin.

HYLAS.

What follows ? strife is knit by ties of blood,
Oftener than harmony.

EVADNE.

Hate is new to me.
Sure I have injured no one — scarce required
My privileged dues ; yet if exasperate sense
Of inadvertent or imagined wrong
Hath spurred you on this monstrous seeming course,
Declare it, I beseech you. Laying bare
The root of our dissension may subvert it.

HYLAS.

I am unpractised how to vindicate
My cause with words ; but thus much simply statè :
That, unattaint with malice or revenge
'Gainst thy time-honoured grandsire or thee,
For my undoubted birthright I stood forth,

Sole male successor to the Illyrian throne.
What though a fond old man conferred his crown
Where custom long and nature both forbade,
I deemed a gallant nation trained to arms,
Would choose a warrior, not a girl. I deemed
Some knowledge and command became a ruler ;
And — ignorant how these things are let for hire,
Or their fair counterfeits, by venal slaves —
I fortified my claim in their possession.
Enough — in being here I do confess
My condemnation — challenging your vengeance,
Nor coveting delay.

EVADNE.

You have beheld
My people prosperous, my state secure,
Mine armies unabated in their might,
Prompt for defence or conquest ; by your own
Acknowledgment the source of your contempt
Is turned aside, then might I not require,
In justice, your renouncing half your quarrel ?

HYLAS.

The taunt is merited.

EVADNE.

It was not meant.

HYLAS.

Nay, wherefore spare me? wherefore else come here?
I threw for a great stake, and am prepared
To pay the forfeiture ; rather, I own,
Defenceless for this petty warfare than
Death's iron grasp.

EVADNE.

Wrong me not, noble Prince !
(For nobler than your words my spirit reads you).
I cannot o'er the unfortunate exult,
Nor would I have one generous heart my foe.
You will not be my friend — yet, go in peace ;
Only think of me, I entreat, less harshly.
This signet frees your path.

HYLAS.

Madam, I thank you.
You have twice conquered me ; in courtesy,
No less than war. I trouble you no more ;
But, lest to stoop my regal style beneath
The throne I should ascend, too irksome prove,
In distant lands my sword shall shape itself
A newer path to honour. Fare you well. [*going*.]

EVADNE.

Ah me, unhappy ! He is gone — for ever ! [*faints*.]

OLYMPIAS.

Help, help, she falls ! — Alas ! my royal mistress !
[*The guards rush in*.]

GUARD.

The Queen ! — Ho ! seize the traitor !

HYLAS (*returning*).

What's the matter ?
How ! is the princess often thus, good lady ?

OLYMPIAS.

Look up, dear Sov'reign. Take him hence ; begone !

EVADNE.

Who waits ? O my Olympias ! art thou there ? —

What men are these? — Nay, I am quite well now.
Leave us, my friends. [*Exeunt guards.*]

Alas! what can I say?
Should I be wroth with traitors, now proclaimed
Worst traitor to myself?

HYLAS.

What may this mean?

OLYMPIAS.

Dear lady, let us go, — some other time.

EVADNE.

No, now it is most meet. It were in vain
To fling the thin veil of indifferent pride
On my abasement. I ask not your love; [*To Hylas.*]
That were most vain; but in my people's eyes
Let me not wear the shame of your rejection.
They love, they reverence me. — What will they
think,

Seeing their Queen despised? and how shall I
Appear, — a mark of scorn? No; rather take
My hand, my crown, my power — seeming, at least,
Not to disdain what thousands dearly prize.

HYLAS.

Madam, amazement holds me dumb. Unversed
Am I in feminine caprice. May be,
This is some brave device to make you sport,
And me the dull butt of your mockery—
A worthy pastime!

OLYMPIAS.

Little skilled to rule,
He who discerns not truth's clear front from falsehood.

EVADNE.

Too much is said — the rest let silence cover !

HYLAS.

Nay, if you are in earnest, pardon me ;
I take your offer. Lo ! my hand and faith
Wait your acceptance. What will be the end
Time must determine ;—nought more strange than
this.

EVADNE.

It is concluded. Guardian spirits smile
Upon this act, as my intent is pure !

[*Exeunt* HYLAS and EVADNE.]

OLYMPIAS (*following*).

O heart of stone ! O most unhappy fate !
Can goodness match with guilt, or love with hate !

SCENE III. *A Room in the Palace.*

Enter CASSANDER, TIMON, *etc.*

TIMON.

So suddenly ! — it is most wonderful.
A treaty made, you say — a marriage fixed ?

CASSANDER.

It is determined. We are summoned hither
To greet our future Sovereign, that same Hylas
Who yesterday in fetters stood before us.

TIMON.

A mighty change !

CASSANDER.

For us, no less than him ;
And at the best, a grievous one for many.

TIMON.

As I came here, one said Prince Polydore
Was seen with furious speed spurring towards
The northern gates.

CASSANDER.

'Tis very like ; poor youth !
And here comes one whose gloomy brow betrays
The downfall of his hopes.

Enter DEMETRIUS and DORACLES.

DORACLES.

Demetrius, hail !
I see you loiter not to tend your homage
To our new-risen sun.

DEMETRIUS.

'Faith, I am curious ;
This metamorphose should be worth the marking.

DORACLES.

May we be perfect in our parts ! Scant time
Is given for study.

DEMETRIUS.

My nature is unapt
To change the conqueror's for a subject's style.
It is too monstrous ; — this revolted traitor,
Who for his crimes the gods but now delivered
Into our hands — shall he rule over us ?
And by a freak of fortune, some unspelt,

Girlish caprice, reap instantly the fruits
Of victory he lost ! I'll not believe
This is Evadne's doing ; but Pausanias
Hath for his private ends induced her wise
And pious mind to this perverse procedure.
But if I find it so —

CASSANDER.

Softly, brave general :
You magnify the evil that offends you.
I know no fault in Hylas, save what springs
From over passion for the Illyrian throne,
Which, being satisfied, affords presumption
He'll dearly cherish in possession.

DEMETRIUS.

Ay,

Ev'n as a wolf the sheep whose fold receives him.

CASSANDER.

Tush, tush! — he knows us better : having tried
The sharpness of our fangs, I do not doubt
He will again provoke them. Good, my friends ;
Being strong 'gainst all assaults, wherefore should we
Forestal them with surmise ? moreover, do not
Our Lady's excellences fairly claim
Forbearance from our judgment ?

DORACLES.

Most complete.

I shall approve, for one, do what she will.

*Enter EVADNE, HYLAS, PAUSANIAS, LEONTES,
OLYMPIAS, ZENOPHILA, etc.*

EVADNE.

My lords, I have requested your attendance
Here to present to you this noble Prince,
Sprung from our royal house, and now, no more
The foe, but, as I trust, the shield and bulwark
Henceforward of the state.

CASSANDER.

Madam, accept
Our thanks and warm applause. 'Tis glorious
To vanquish a strong enemy, but more,
To win him for a friend. We welcome you,
Illustrious Sir, with joy, restored to home.

EVADNE.

My lord Demetrius, you will not refuse us
A friendly greeting?

DEMETRIUS.

My humble duty ever
Attends your highness ; but I stand in doubt,
How in acceptable terms I might address
Exalted Hylas.

HYLAS.

Let not that disturb you ;
From a brave man nothing can come amiss.
Either as friend or foe I count it honour
To cope on equal terms, in courtesy,
Or if he please, defiance.

PAUSANIAS.

Justly spoke,
And now, the fiend of strife being laid asleep,
The past forgotten, let us only vie
In acts of friendship, so to knit more close
This new-tied bond of love, this dear affiance,
Auspicious of security and peace,
Where late frowned war and dread.

DEMETRIUS.

I am content.
Behold, my sword that needs no commendation
Save from its deeds, I pledge in this compact
To its assurance, and the punishment
Of who transgress it first.

HYLAS.

Now, by my birthright,
[*Aside to LEONTES.*
Leontes, I'd renounce the chance of empire,
But for one hour to chastise yon braggart.

LEONTES.

Would it be worth the while? but, Sir, be calm;
All eyes are on you.

HYLAS.

I care not. I swear
This tame-led bondage is more insupportable
Than chains or poison.

LEONTES.

Yet —

HYLAS.

Enough — I'm schooled.

EVADNE (*to Pausanias*).

You did, my lord, solicit mine attention
This morning on some matters of much import —
I know not what ; but am at leisure now.

PAUSANIAS.

Madam, I wait upon your gracious pleasure.
[*They retire and converse.*]

HYLAS (*to DORACLES*).

Did I not see you, in the battle, Sir ?

DORACLES.

I was there.

HYLAS.

Oh, your presence made itself
Palpable and notorious — you were marshal
To death that day, and havock marked your progress.

I had not thought these silken realms of peace
Could breed such warriors, at a lady's nod
Starting all-armed and eager for the fray ! —
With better information the result
Might have been otherwise.

[*He goes up to ZENOPHILA.*]

You, fairest maiden,
Methinks, adorned the triumph : from your eyes
The glancing messengers of joy shone forth,
Exulting in my fall ; but now, I grieve
To see your smiles withdrawn from this fresh
pageant,
Wherein my part, as much conspicuous,
Belike, you less approve.

ZENOPHILA.

Pardon me, Sir,

If in defeat of an undoubted foe
I found just scope for gladness.

HYLAS.

As a friend

You will not hold me, then.

ZENOPHILA.

I do not know you.

HYLAS.

That's true ; and yet I am your friend ; so well
Disdain becomes your beauty, and that here
I recognize a somewhat kindred spirit,
Reverberative in every pulse to scorn,
Replete with fires might warm a soldier's faith,
And light his proud career.

DORACLES.

This is too much !

CASSANDER.

My gracious lord, our maidens are unused
To such bold flattery : and who would mark
Inferior lustres, that may sun himself
In the true orb of day ?

HYLAS.

Grave Sir, I take

Your meaning ; but crave leave to speak as fancy
Prompt, from th' unbribed report of mine own
eyes.

EVADNE.

My lords, the night wears on ; I wish you all

[Comes forward.]

A good repose. Prince Hylas in the house
Of this our honoured counsellor, accept
What hospitable cares afford. Good night !

[Exeunt EVADNE, Ladies.]

HYLAS.

My reverend host, unwillingly, it seems,
I must be burdensome to you.

PAUSANIAS.

Not unless
You grudge me so much honour.

HYLAS.

Let me then
At once bespeak your wardship. My new friends,
I take my leave, with hopes that time may further
Th' acquaintance so propitiously begun.

[Exeunt with PAUSANIAS.]

TIMON.

What, will this hold, think you ?

DORACLES.

Did you observe
His studied slights ? Shall insolence like this
'Scape double chastisement ?

DEMETRIUS.

Patience, my friend ;
Some demon hath possessed him to perform
Our work unhired. Beware you check it not.

[Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE. I. *A wild mountainous country.**Enter POLYDORE.*

POLYDORE.

All night I've darkling fled, yet cannot 'scape
From the dark demon that doth goad me on,
Whispering things horrible. Fair morn is come,
Man's hated habitations past, and ye,
Wide, melancholy wastes, spread far enough
To encompass my despair! Here will I dwell,
In some rude cave, or hollow tree, with none
But Nature's innocent ministers — the air,
The brook, the rustling leaves, answering my moans,
Till they sweep out these busy shapes that swarm
From the world's memory to taunt my frenzy.
Hah! restless fiend, what mutterest thou? I know
My cursed rival's triumph — tempt me not,
For I am much enduring. Say 'twere better
To plunge at once in death — to end this strife;
Yet then could fancy to the clay-bound eye
Call up that heavenly image, even now
Past bliss to think upon? No, I will live
Till that last consciousness depart; but dead
To every meaner thought. Here I cast off
The trappings of my state. Thou idle piece
Of Vulcan's art, that dost profess to guard
'Gainst weaponed foe, yet left me all defenceless

To a more subtle stroke, hang there ; and thou,
 [*Hangs his shield and helmet, etc. on a tree.*
Vain emblem, hollow gaud, — thus I put from me
Th' abhorred remembrancers of human toils.
O Macedonia ! O my father's house !
In vain ye look for me — in vain await
Him who returns no more. O pardon me,
If to myself being lost, follows the loss
Of your rights in me. This is not my doing :
A greater power, inimical and dire,
Hath worked this ruin. — I am but the weed
Flung on the blasts of fate to moulder here.
 [*Throws himself on the ground.*

Enter a ragged Soldier.

SOLDIER.

Out of this scrape once safe, I do forswear
Mars' thankless service. — Unto what a pass
Hath his fierce god-ship brought me ! — I have fed
Three days on roots and berries : it were better
Dare the rude vengeance of the country boors,
Than die here of starvation. Hark ! what 's that ?
A groan ? — 'twas hence. [*Discovering* POLYDORE.
Ho ! friend ; asleep or dead ?

POLYDORE (*rising*).

What art thou ?

SOLDIER.

A man ; and it should seem
In scarce worse plight than thou.

POLYDORÉ.

I need no fellow in my wretchedness.
Grant me a hiding-place, O boundless Nature!
A den where fierce beasts make their lair — a rock
Where desert eagles build, so man approach not!
[*Exit.*]

SOLDIER.

So ; get thee gone. — I love not solitude,
Yet rather than a comrade lunatic.
But what is this ? O fortune, thou and I
Are quits — this pays old scores. — It is all gold.
Do wild oaks bear such burdens ? or did yon mad-
man

Array them thus ? No matter ; — now 'tis mine.
I'll swear, at home, that I did slay a prince
In single combat, and display these trophies —
They'll fetch me fame and wealth. I'm made for
life.

But soft — who comes ? no sharers.

Enter HYLAS *and* LEONTES.

HYLAS.

So far, well ;
The worst half of our homeward journey's sped.
Dost thou not feel, Leontes, that we breathe
At every step more lively air, our limbs
More freely move ?

LEONTES.

Not I, in faith ; I am weary.

HYLAS.

Shame on thee, dullard !— [*Seeing the soldier.*

Ho ! thou skulker, there !

Come forward—how is this ? By all that 's strange,

I do not err—this is the armour worn

Upon the field by yonder Macedonian.

How cam'st thou by it ? Whence ? Speak, or
thou diest.

SOLDIER.

Sir, as I live, I found it here—I know not

How brought—hung on these boughs—

HYLAS.

A likely tale !

LEONTES.

Yet this agrees with what I heard—that Polydore

Was for Evadne's love distract. They said

That instantly he fled, on the report

Of her rare choice, you wot of.

HYLAS.

Hapless wretch !

Had he but waited some few hours, no cause

For flight remained.—Mine honest friend, thou
wearest

A hungry, hang-dog look, that might bear hard

Against thee in a less suspicious case ;

Whence art thou ?

SOLDIER.

From Epirus. Since the truth

Cannot make matters worse, know that I came

With the invading army.

HYLAS.

Ay! and took
To your heels when blows began.

SOLDIER.

I did my best ;
I fought to the last, and when our chief was slain,
'Scaped i' the common rout.

HYLAS.

Look on me, fellow.
Know'st thou me not?

SOLDIER.

My lord ! O valiant general—

HYLAS.

Of a right valiant herd. My trust in ye
Hath proved my ruin.

SOLDIER.

You upbraid me wrongly ;
But ne'er was sound so welcome to my ear.
To see you living, free ! Sir, grant me but
Once to rejoin your standard—if I flinch,
Reville me, scourge me as a slave, a coward.
Give me the trial.

HYLAS.

Well ; but behold me here,
A wanderer, dispossessed of friends and power.
I have no army now.

SOLDIER.

Thou hast a sword.

HYLAS.

I have ; and 'twill go hard, but I shall find

Fresh work for it ere long. And, worthy friend,
For such I judge thee, wilt thou be, indeed,
A follower of my fortunes ? thou may'st share
Their prosperous turn, as late disgrace. Below,
My servants by a safer path lead round
Our steeds—with them proceed.

SOLDIER.

My lord, I go.

But what with these ? [*Taking up the armour.*

HYLAS.

Nay, leave them there ; or rather,
Hang where you found ;—a monument of one
Too noble for his fate. [*Exit Soldier.*

This Polydore—

'Tis strange 'twixt man and man the difference !
That such a toy of fancy, a mere trifle,
Should be so entertained by some, as quite
To shove high reason from her seat, and change
Perception's use.

LEONTES.

Pardon, if I conceive
Ev'n in your judgment, like subservience
To wonderful caprice,—or wherefore here ?

HYLAS.

Wherefore ? because I could not be a slave,
A fawning, smiling traitor to my rights—
Because I could not brook contemptuous sneers ;
Nor will accept in guerdon what I claim
Mine own, inalienable.

LEONTES.

So you reject

A proffered throne, with love, that might be held
Above dominion,—thro' amazing pride
Rush back to strife and danger,—letting loose
On your own land the cruel dogs of war,
To rend its entrails, glut themselves with spoil !

HYLAS.

Not this do I intend. Something I owe
Evadne, and no more disturb her throne ;
But in my home, where my forefathers ruled,
I will acknowledge no superior.
Dare they assail me—let them look to it.
The chance of war may change ! Nay, urge me not.
Bind heaven's free air with chains, then deem my
soul
May wear them. What, hast thou to learn it yet ?
If this displease thee, go ;—thou well may'st find
A wiser and more prosperous friend. My fortunes
Have small attraction.

LEONTES.

Never ! now thou wrong'st me.

All that I have is thine ; the life thou savedst
I hold but for thy service. If my love
Make me offend, it is not in my keeping,
But wholly thine. Be it thy will to beard
Pluto upon his throne, lead on ; I follow.

HYLAS.

To prove such perfect friendship, not in vain
I lose a kingdom and account it gain. [Exeunt.

SCENE II. *Room in the Palace.**Enter PAUSANIAS and CASSANDER.*

PAUSANIAS.

Surely some adverse influence rules our fate,
Confounding expectation ; every day
Destroys the fabric of vain hope, reared up
By that preceding. Polydore is gone,
And Hylas fled ; leaving behind a train
Of evils and contending interests
Soon to burst forth in ruin.

CASSANDER.

How did the Queen
Receive these tidings ?

PAUSANIAS.

With exceeding calmness ;
But gentleness and dignity in her
So well contend with sorrow, it were hard
To judge how far she entertaineth it.

CASSANDER.

Why she must learn to hate and scorn the traitor,
Or lack a woman's nature.

PAUSANIAS.

That may be.
When one of those about her did exclaim
Against his mad ingratitude, she said,
I blame him not ; the eagle cannot change
His eyrie mid the clouds for a tame perch,
Or stoop to master-hand. Yet afterwards,

She sighed, and murmured, Had he known me better,
He would not have dealt thus.

CASSANDER.

Alas ! poor lady !
Thou 'st cast thy pearls to one whose brutish sense
Cannot approve their worth.

Enter DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.

My lord Pausanias,
How stand your purposes ? It seemeth meet
To call together our disbanded troops,
And straightway sound to arms.

PAUSANIAS.

Why this, my lord,
Against a single fugitive, destitute
Of power and means ?

DEMETRIUS.

Know that Albania still
Holds out for him. Their mountain-fastnesses
Secured, make formidable their revolt.

PAUSANIAS.

It shall be seen to. Let all hearts unite
In self-denying loyalty at home,
Aggression we defy. Brave general,
Your presence is desired at the council.

[*Exeunt* PAUSANIAS and CASSANDER.]

DEMETRIUS.

I follow you. Ay, soon to go before.
Now the plot thickens — now the hour draws near

Of my ascendance. Needs no stratagem,
No act of prowess, when our rivals smooth
Each obstacle before us. Glorious war!
Soon hand in hand with thee I climb the heights
Of my ambitious hope. With this good sword
I set at nought the slippery chance of favour,
Or grey-beard wisdom, prescient of its fall.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III. *The same.*

Enter DORACLES and ZENOPHILA.

DORACLES.

Yes, sweet Zenophila, the rainbow hues
Of peace, delusive, vanish from our sky,
And darker clouds bring back the storm of war.
Again I leave thee and the promised bliss
That seemed so near, for distant battle-fields
And midnight watches, where thy memory
Shall my sole solace prove.

ZENOPHILA.

Ah! twofold woe
This second parting brings. Less ardour gilds
Your going forth, and no exultant joy
Waits your return. To our dear Sovereign
Defeat or conquest must alike come charged
With anguish and regret.

DORACLES.

I did not think
She held her loss so dearly.

ZENOPHILA.

Fatal most

The inward-bleeding wound. This hath struck
home.

DORACLES.

But wherefore should she grieve? the traitor's blood
Shall expiate her wrongs.

ZENOPHILA.

O Doracles,

Consider what a cureless wrong it is
To be so scorned and shunned, where one hath set
All the heart's lavish treasures. Hence she feels
Her glory in the eyes of men diminished;
Her pomps and public gratulations seem
As hateful mockery glossing keen disgrace;
And who can blame her for it?—were't my case,
I should go mad or die.

DORACLES.

For vanity?

I fear, Zenophila, thou canst not love
As doth our Queen.

ZENOPHILA.

Nay, rest assured of that.

And who, not conscious of much undesert,
But would prefer the measured, rational choice
That waits on merit? But we idly talk,
While she to whom our every care is due,
Evadne, lies the prey of stern despair;
In silence wastes her soul; she takes no heed
Of aught around. Neither revenge nor fear

Hath power to rouse her thought, whose whole desire
Tends to the quiet grave.

DORACLES.

No, by the gods !

This must not be. — To-day she doth receive
Thy reverend father, with the lords, who crave
Her sanction to their late deliberations :
Then will we show to her such argument
Of unabated, universal love,
And for her proper glory, as must rouse
The ashes of her native fires to more
Than former splendour.

ZENOPHILA.

Would it may avail ! —

Go, summon now my father, for behold,
She doth approach. Heaven prosper your intent !

[*Exit* DORACLES.]

Enter EVADNE supported by OLYMPIAS—*Ladies.*

OLYMPIAS.

Here will you take your seat ? Say, dearest Queen,
How is it with you ?

EVADNE.

I am very weary.

Why will they vex me with these hollow forms ?

OLYMPIAS.

What can I do for you, beloved ? Say,
Will you go in ?

EVADNE.

'Tis everywhere the same.

How gloomy are these halls—the air hangs heavy—
O that the free-winged mountain-breeze might fan
My burning brow ! that I might roam unseen
The woodland heights !

OLYMPIAS.

Alas ! my child, thy thoughts
Are wandering far.

EVADNE.

What have I said, Olympias ?
Why wilt thou speak to me ? I am not well.

OLYMPIAS.

What must be done ? It is impossible
Thus to receive the council. Shall I send word
You are ill at ease, and will not speak with them ?

EVADNE.

No, let them come,—somewhat remains to say —
I am yet a Queen.

Enter PAUSANIAS, DEMETRIUS, DORACLES, etc.

EVADNE.

Now, good Pausanias,
What tidings bring you ?

PAUSANIAS.

Gracious Madam, news
Hath reached us that the rebels in Albania
Make themselves strong and openly renounce
Allegiance to your sceptre. It is judged
Your armies should go forth without delay,
And crush, ev'n in their nests, the hostile swarm—
Be it your royal will.

EVADNE.

To hear once more
The din of battle — urge foul havock on,
To devastate my realm — deliver up
My people to red slaughter, till a curse
From every home bereaved, climbs to high heaven
Against my hated head — this is the cup
Ye offer to my lips. O, that I might
Rather lay down this golden rim, that sears
Mine aching brow! — put off these cumbrous robes,—
They have crusht my youth to dust.

PAUSANIAS.

O most dear Lady,
If long-proved service—

EVADNE.

Mine all-honoured friend —
One word I have for thee. — When I am gone,
As soon I must — this anguish cannot last —
Confer that perfect faith where it must then
Fall due. — O do not let my memory
Stir strife, as my most hapless being hath done!

PAUSANIAS.

Have I outlived the privilege to die?

DORACLES.

Hear me, great Sovereign; let me intercede
For many a thousand loving hearts, whose hope
Only exists in you. Their happiness
Your sires renowned committed to your charge;
How is it forfeited? how have they deserved
That you should thus abandon them, unthought of,

To their relentless foe? O be assured,
 Not one so base, that would not rather pour
 For thee and freedom his best blood, than spare it
 To curdle at a tyrant's frown. — Come forth,
 As thou wert wont! Enkindle every soul
 To an immortal valour.—On thy brow,
 Let us behold once more this laurel wreath,
 Memorial of past victory, and pledge
 Of glories yet to follow. [*Offering her the wreath.*]

EVADNE.

See—'tis withered—

A fitting emblem have ye brought me.

OLYMPIAS.

Ah!

In this ye have judged ill—look, look! my child!

EVADNE.

Dear mother—hide mine eyes—my brains swim
 round—

These dizzy noises—I would be at rest—

OLYMPIAS.

Dearest, look up—help, help! she is dying.

ZENOPHILA.

Oh!

Lift up her head—crowd not around—

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis but

A swoon—call instant aid; carry her in.

[*Exeunt Ladies with EVADNE.*]

PAUSANIAS.

Restore her, O protecting deities!

Forgive our share herein.— Had we not stretched
The strained chord, it might not thus have broken.

DEMETRIUS.

Whate'er th' event, the expedition holds.

PAUSANIAS.

Say'st thou ?

DEMETRIUS.

I ask what you propose, my lords,
Should the Queen not recover ?

PAUSANIAS.

To fulfil

Her last behest — acknowledge Hylas king.

DEMETRIUS.

How ? do I hear aright ? Who shall be found
To second such design ?

PAUSANIAS.

Who can gainsay it ?

DORACLES.

Pardon me, Sir, if I must needs confess,
This resolution suiteth ill thy strain
Of loftiest honour.

PAUSANIAS.

Son, when thou hast told
Mine years, thou'lt find no higher flight for virtue
Than the plain track of duty.

Enter ZENOPHILA.

ZENOPHILA.

O my father !

My father — she is dead !

ALL.

Evadne dead !

PAUSANIAS.

My child, be calm ; clamour may not express
So infinite a woe. One task is left me ;
Then, having followed to the tomb this last,
Most cherisht of my royal master's race.
May I depart !

ZENOPHILA.

O no ! hast thou no thought
Of me, my father ?

PAUSANIAS.

Ever blest be thou,
As dear — but I am old. Good friends, this day
We dedicate to mourning o'er a loss
Past Time's repair. What next is to be done,
The next resolve, — enough, enough, for one.
[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *House of Pausanias.**Enter Servants, meeting.*

FIRST SERVANT.

Now, are ye ready ? are all things prepared ?
The King will be here straight.

SECOND SERVANT.

What, is he come ?

How looks he ? How do they receive him ? Tell
us
Quickly, good Philo.

FIRST SERVANT.

Why, as befits a king,
Before well throned — courteous and brave ; but
yet,
Methinks there lurked a — something in his smile,
As who should say, good people, there remain
Some old accounts betwixt us, and the reckoning—
Ah ! we shall smart for 't yet. We may have cause
To wish our poor Queen back.

SECOND SERVANT.

Ay ! And our master ?—
How goes it with Pausanias ?

FIRST SERVANT.

O, he rides
At Hylas' side, who loadeth him with honour.
At every word, it is : " our reverend friend,"
And, " noble lord," and " much-loved counsellor"—
There's something in the wind, and I could tell
you ;
But 'twere unsafe.

SERVANTS.

Nay, speak — we will be secret.
What is it, Philo ?

FIRST SERVANT.

Nay ; 'tis but a rumour—
Listen — but mind, you must not blab—

SERVANTS.

Come, come ;

We will not.

FIRST SERVANT.

Well then, it is thought the King
Shall share the crown with our young mistress.

SERVANTS.

What,

Zenophila, Doracles' promised bride ?

FIRST SERVANT.

O that 's a trifle here.

THIRD SERVANT.

'Tis a strange world.

Who could have deemed, that recently beheld
Pausanias at Evadne's obsequies,
He 'd ever smile again, or give appliance
To thoughts of earthly gear ?

FIRST SERVANT.

Tush, man ! old age,
Though deaf to joy, answers to interest still.
But hark ! the trumpets. — Each one to his place.
[*They retire.*

Enter HYLAS, PAUSANIAS, LEONTES, DEMETRIUS,
DORACLES, *etc.*

HYLAS.

Mine honoured host, re-entering your house,
I must remember with what thankless silence

I left it formerly ; thus in your debt
For past as present hospitality.

PAUSANIAS.

Sir, you are welcome ; all that I can offer
Is now your due.

HYLAS.

That it is so, I am


Also beholden to you ; whose aid wanting,
I might not have thus peaceably attained
Mine ancient heritage. O Pausanias,
Believe not I have stopped mine ears against
The fame of thy high worth. Ev'n when my foe
Declared, in thee I saw with reverence
The prop and guardian of my country's weal :
And now, to thine experienced wisdom look
How to maintain her prosperous state, and win
My people's love ; for I perceive they greet
My coming coldly, with averted looks ;
More as a conqueror's, than a trusted friend's.

PAUSANIAS.

Proving you so, doubt not their gratitude
Will keep pace with your bounties. But for me—
My grey hairs warn me of decay, and now,
My service being accomplished, I crave leave
To younger, abler hands here to resign
The burden grown too weighty for mine years.

HYLAS.

Nay, thou shalt not desert us thus ; or else,
Receive me as thy pupil ; here I'll seek
Lessons of government and example clear



Of all true worth. The very walls might teach me,
Shouldst thou keep silence, where I see portrayed
The heroes of our line — Illyria's boast.
These are the lineaments of Glaucias, wise,
Illustrious lawgiver; this, great Amyntor,
At bare remembrance of whose 'venging sword
The boastful Greek yet quakes — and here, I mark
Still-wept Evander's venerable head.
But this is veiled — as I surmise, the shade
Of one distinguished above all; for thither
Thy gaze returneth, as averse to fix
On meaner object.

PAUSANIAS.

Pardon me; this is,
Indeed, most sacred.

HYLAS.

Thou dost hold us, then,
Unworthy to look on it? Let it suffice,
Such is the King's desire.

PAUSANIAS.

Alas! the sight
Will give you little joy. [*The curtain is withdrawn.*]

HYLAS.

Why, what is this?
A youthful female form — the dead Evadne's? —
Then hath the painter borrowed much from fancy,
Or I beheld not right.

PAUSANIAS.

Ev'n so she looked,
Ev'n so she smiled, some little while ago,

Like a blest visitant from happier spheres,
Diffusing light and gladness.

HYLAS.

Wilt thou tell me so?

Her cheek was ever pale, downcast her eye,
Fettered to secret discontent; but here —
Grief could not stand before that radiant brow,
Nor mortal pain come nigh to do her harm.
Can such change be?

PAUSANIAS.

Woe's me! that so it was.

We cannot tell by what fine sympathy
Life's energies obey the spirit's prompting;
But know she looked on hate, and never more
Found joy on earth. The venom'd glance of scorn
Fallen on her youth, withered its garlands fair,
And so she pined and died. — Alas! for her
Were scorn and hatred never meant — in whom
All sweet perfections, all excelling gifts
Of nature met, to raise our love and wonder.
Blessing and blessed was her sway, confirmed
In peace and glory; equally upholding
Justice with mercy tempered; but the land
Merited not such bliss, and, for our sins,
The gods would not permit her stay. She fled,
Leaving the world a void. —
Pardon me, Sir; my soul is in her grave;
And till these aged eyes and faltering tongue
Are stopped in dust, I have no other theme
For speech or tears.

HYLAS.

Good friend, thine honest praise
Hath no offence ; rather, constraineth me
To judge according to thy measurement
One who, so adverse were our fortunes, I
Could not well scan.

PAUSANIAS.

Enough of vain lament.
Permit me, gracious Sir, to offer now
What entertainment my poor house affords.
The banquet waits your presence.

CASSANDER (*to LEONTES*).

Sure, he hears not ;
But stands absorbed in thought.

HYLAS.

I do remember
A worthy gentlewoman, who was ever
Attendant on Evadne ; — where resides she ?

PAUSANIAS.

Olympias ? — in deep retirement
She mourns her mistress' loss.

HYLAS.

She would, no doubt,
Abhor to look on me. Beseech you, Sir,
I have a favour to request — fear not —
I would not rob you of this picture, none
So well deserve, — but do entreat the loan
For a brief space ; it shall receive no harm.
Methinks, I fain would better learn the features
Of one confessed my friend.

PAUSANIAS.

Nought else remains —
Sole, sweet memorial of the worshipped dead,
Beguiling cureless woe — nevertheless,
Your royal will be done.

HYLAS.

Thanks; shall we go?

[*Exeunt.*]DEMETRIUS *and* DORACLES *come forward.*

DEMETRIUS.

Thou 'st seen?

DORACLES.

I have.

DEMETRIUS.

And heard?

DORACLES.

But little.

DEMETRIUS.

True;

Private was their discourse, yet evident
Its tenor.

DORACLES.

Not of that thou urgest.

DEMETRIUS.

I

Urge nothing. 'Tis the general report
Hylas shall wed your bride. 'Tis plain he courts
His father, 'gainst his nature, and Pausanias

Bends to Evadne's murderer, waiting on
His least behest; — all this concerns me not.

DORACLES.

Tempt me no more, Demetrius. I know
Thy dangerous, vast designs — yea, could approve
them,

But dare not harbour distrust 'gainst a man
Beyond remembrance stamped with veneration.
In minds of such stern mould the cast of duty,
Determinate, knows no warp of weak affection,
Or sordid stain; therefore Pausanias honours
Illyria's heir in Hylas — nothing more.

DEMETRIUS.

No doubt; nor will such loyalty deny
His daughter to a king.

DORACLES.

He dare not ask it!

I tell thee, friend, but for her sake, I had not
One moment breathed the common air with this
Crowned recreant, or bowed before his pride.
Should he attempt this wrong, first let him try
Whose arm is strongest — first, my sword shall seek
Its passage to his heart!

DEMETRIUS.

At last, thou 'rt roused;
And better thus, than never; but, O friend,
Our general griefs need not the aggravation
Of partial wrong. More sacred is the cause
On which I have sworn vengeance: — thy pale ghost,

Unhappy Queen ! thy throne, polluted by
A traitor steeped in crime — and thou, my country,
Betrayed to him whose sacrilegious rage
Led foreign bandits to assault thy gates !
These are my battle-ground.

DORACLES.

Then wherefore not
Have barred his coming ?

DEMETRIUS.

Seek in thine own heart
The answer. Most part like to thee, luke-warm,
And swayed 'twixt doubts and fears — where could
I find
Co-partners in my boldness ?

DORACLES.

I deserve
Too truly thy reproach : all yet may be
Amended — thou shalt not upbraid my slowness,
Once girded to the work ; of this anon.
I here await an interview, whereby
In doubtful balance hangs my fate.

DEMETRIUS.

Farewell !
And take thou heed, brave youth, no maiden wiles
Or well-feigned tears impair thy stubborn purpose.

DORACLES.

Mistrust me not. *[Exit DEMETRIUS.*

And what then is my purpose ?
To tread the dark ways of conspiracy,
In chase of fugitive honour. — Even so,

Rather than stoop — Alas ! Zenophila,
Vainly I strive after a nobler course ;
I have no aim but thee,—and thou prove false !

Enter ZENOPHILA.

ZENOPHILA.

Here, Doracles ? thou hast not joined the banquet.

DORACLES.

I have no business there—some memory
Of things convenient to forget still clings,
To my disquiet ; thou, Zenophila,
More wisdom show'st. The wreaths yet freshly
hang
Upon Evadne's tomb, still wet with tears,
Wept from a thousand eyes now dressed in joy
To welcome her destroyer.

ZENOPHILA.

Why recall

These bitter recollections ? We must bear
And mourn in silence.

DORACLES.

Nay, why not rejoice

Openly in the glorious change ? avow
Oblivion claims the past ; old faith and love
Flung on the winds, fade traceless as the breath
That syllabled their vows. Ay, proudly wear
What proves thee worthy to partake the greatness
Achieved by such exploits.

ZENOPHILA.

Thou ravest, Doracles,

Thy words of insult wound mine ear—their sense
I guess not.

DORACLES.

It might be that all tongues err ;
Yet constantly do they assert, the price
Pausanias for affirming Hylas' throne
Demands, is that his lovely daughter share it.

ZENOPHILA.

This is too much. Ungrateful as thou art
With slanderous lips to cast dishonour on
My gracious sire. What bad genius prompts thee ?
Or dost thou seek a quarrel ? Would'st thou break
The bond between us—why such violence,
As I should thwart thy fancy ?

DORACLES.

Did I doubt ?

Alas ! thy perfidy shows yet more plain
Than simulated anger. Never more
My presence shall upbraid thee ; but, beware !
The faith thou scornest, turned to rage, shall burn
A deadly brand of vengeance and destruction.

[*Exit.*

ZENOPHILA.

What may this mean ? Oh, all men are alike,
Cruel and false ! whether in love or hate,
Heeding but selfish passion's voice. Ah me !
For hearts that love and put their trust in them.
Seek rather on the treacherous wave for rest,
Or lean against sharp thorns th' unguarded breast.

[*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *The King's cabinet. HYLAS before the Picture.*

HYLAS.

Thou painted shadow, still unreal image
Of animated loveliness, that seem'st
Like breathing life ! and art thou all is left
Of her whose step made earth a paradise,
Whose memory—a grave ? and this my doing !
Wise, gentle, beautiful, she had no fault
But loving me. Like the foul basilisk's,
My gaze was fatal—where I might have reaped
Immortal bliss, there planted I despair ;
And that bright cheek did fade, those star-like eyes
Grew dim and hollow—they are closed for ever.

Enter LEONTES.

How now, Leontes ?

LEONTES.

Sir, I come to learn
Your pleasure. If your purpose hold, the chase
Awaits you.

HYLAS.

Seest thou, mine idleness
Renders yon imaged charms the due my folly
Denied to their possessor !

LEONTES.

In sad truth,

Most strange was your neglect. But grant me, Sir,
An audience on grave matters, that demand
Immediate care.

HYLAS.

Speak ; I had judged the wheels
Of business turned so smooth, so trimly ordered,
That the director of the vast machine
Might doze securely.

LEONTES.

While conspiring hate
In secret works.

HYLAS.

I know ;—Demetrius—
You aim at—I am warned is dangerous.
So would I have him. Yes, my friend, believe,
The sound of his revolt were cheerful music,
Rousing to reparation for the shame
Of uneffaced defeat and bonds.

LEONTES.

I'm sorry
To see you stirred thus, since your full desires
Teem with Illyria's woe.

HYLAS.

Shall that arrest me ?
Do I not read their hate, ay, their contempt
In each smooth aspect ? THAT, at least, shall
change
To maskless fears. Mine iron rule shall be
Terrible, if unloved. [*He turns to the picture.*
Lo, there ! That look

Controlled all minds with sweet supremacy
To just obedience. Turbulence forgot
Its nature for her sake.—O savage heart !
Dull as earth's clod, brutish as grazing herds,
Alone insensible to that clear ray
Thy guilt hath quenched !

LEONTES.

These thoughts cannot avail ;

It is too late.

HYLAS.

It is too late ! Might Time's
Broad pinion turn, and bear me back one hour
For reparation ! Else, why leave behind
The memory, the phantoms of the past
To rack our brains with impotent remorse !
But come—too much of this. We'll to the chase.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A Forest.*

Enter DEMETRIUS and DORACLES, with Attendants.

DEMETRIUS (*to Attendants*).

Withdraw behind yon coverts ; there await
My further orders.—He must pass that way.
[*Exeunt Attendants.*]
Each circumstance doth favour us,—the King
Hath parted from his suite, and unaware,
Draws toward our ambush ; let us strike the blow,
Before our project cool.

DORACLES.

My strict resolve

Cools not ; but give me leave, my quarrel with him
Is one 'twixt man and man. On equal terms,
At the sword's point I meet him ; if I fail,
'Twill be thy turn,—avenge thou both our wrongs.

[*Exit.*

DEMETRIUS.

Go, headstrong boy ! unfit for weighty schemes,
Or counsel deep, who blindly dost the work
Thou mayest live to thwart, but that I think
Thou rushest on sure doom ; while I make sure
A more important matter.

[*Exit.**Enter* HYLAS.

HYLAS.

It is meet

That all men hate me,—I have newly learned
To hate myself for that I deemed a virtue.
Ah me ! I find our boasted acts oft show
Hideous to after thought. Who can discern
The secrets of all hearts ? being ignorant,
How should we then be just ? My words condemn
Myself ; for on her argent brow fair truth,
As on a crystal throne, transparent shone.
Why does it haunt me thus ? Shall I become
A dreamer, only conversant with shadows ?
Off, puerile load !—the very atmosphere
Infects me, and for her revenge doth cumber
My labouring fancy thus.

[*A voice is heard without, singing.*

Song.

Peace, O peace ! the air is still ;
Sighs are spent, and sorrow dead ;
Look around, and take thy fill
Of quiet joys before thee spread.
No, the past no power can break ;
Still its mournful memories wake—
Every care is vain.
Not till throbs thy pulse no more,
Till life's fevered dream be o'er,
Shalt thou rest from pain.

HYLAS.

Is it the voice
Of wood-nymph answering my complaint ?

Enter EVADNE, disguised as a boy.

EVADNE.

My songs
Silence the grove's sweet warblers, while they bring
No solace to my woes. — I'll sing no more,
Till cheerfully as they. [Seeing HYLAS.
Ah !—is it he ?

HYLAS.

Stay, gentle boy : what dost thou fear ? Come
hither.

EVADNE.

Preserve me, heaven !

HYLAS.

Thou knowest me ?

EVADNE.

Yes, you are

The King.

HYLAS.

And thou hast here already learnt
To tremble at my name. I will not hurt thee.
Who taught thee such sweet strains ?

EVADNE.

My solitude.

Here in the forest all things have a voice,
And meet in harmony.

HYLAS.

Would that my court
Could boast the like. Such tones as thine might
charm
The harpies from their prey. What is thy name ?

EVADNE.

They call me, Daphnis.

HYLAS.

Daphnis, wilt thou come
And dwell with me ?

EVADNE.

O Sir, I must not leave

My mother.

HYLAS.

Bring me to her. Is your home
Within the forest ? I will speak with her.
Nay, lead the way.

Enter DORACLES.

DORACLES.

Now, tyrant, have I found thee ?

Here none can interfere — here I demand
Full reparation for the injuries done me.

HYLAS.

What means this rude assault ? Why Doracles,
How have I done thee wrong ?

DORACLES.

Impious destroyer !
Scorner of sacred rights ! patience would tire
To sum up half thy crimes ; but while I breathe,
Think not to consummate this — first prove thyself
Invulnerable to justice. — When I have failed
To avenge Evadne, take Zenophila.

EVADNE.

Me miserable ! my measure not yet full !

[*She retires.*]

HYLAS.

Thou art beside thyself.

DORACLES.

Treason itself
But poorly imitates thy example. — Draw !
[*They fight.* — DORACLES *falls.*
O thou hast conquered — pierce my heart at once ;
Let me not linger to —

HYLAS.

Live, if thou canst ;
And know thy guilt — I never injured thee.

Enter DEMETRIUS, with Attendants.

DEMETRIUS.

Down with th' usurper. — Strike, friends ! Mis-
creant die !

HYLAS.

Is this your honour? Traitors!

DORACLES.

Villains, hold!

Oh, infamy!

EVADNE.¹

Help! treason! murder! help!

[HYLAS strikes down two of his assailants. As

DEMETRIUS lifts his sword EVADNE springs forward and interposes.

Enter POLYDORE.

POLYDORE.

Ho! who dare raise this clamour in my walks?

Five upon one! Have at ye, fiends!

[DEMETRIUS is slain, the rest fly.

Enter LEONTES, Lords, etc.

LEONTES.

My King!

Thou art unhurt?

HYLAS.

Thanks to this savage man,
Whose club in good time took a share i' the fray.

LEONTES.

The gods requite thee, friend.—Have I not seen
That face before? It is — yet can it be,
So strangely garbed, the Prince of Macedon?

HYLAS.

O lamentable wreck! Art thou, indeed,
The hapless Polydore?

POLYDORE.

Why glare ye on me ?

I know thee, too—thou art the traitor Hylas.
Ay, they have told me all.—Didst thou not plunge
Thy dagger in the trusting heart that loved thee ?
And there thou bravest with stolen royalty
Upbraiding guilt ! O fool ! while in thy breast
Furies hold jubilee, and for thy torture
Their tameless, fiery scorpions whet their stings.

HYLAS.

Can greatness come to this ? Thou noble ruin !
Might I prevail that thou wouldst leave these
wilds,

And be to me a brother ! I would bear,
Yea, love thy keen reproaches ; and we two
Might weep together o'er the diverse webs
Of woe, combining in our destiny.

POLYDORE.

What, dost thou pity me ? Thou tedious slave
Of garish pride, with what stale, loathsome bait
Wouldst thou lure one who feasteth with immortals ?
Hark !— I will tell thee ; — every day at noon,
When the broad shadows sleep, she draweth nigh—
The heavenly form thou know'st—smiles upon me ;
And with such ravishing discourse doth fill
My sense, I weep for very ecstasy.
And I shall follow her — she will not leave me
Again in darkness. — In Elysian bowers
We shall be blest. I come, my love, I come !

[Exit.

HYLAS.

Go after him, Leontes ; bring him back,
Enforce him by all gentle means ; kind cares
May yet restore the shattered chords of thought,
And soothe his wild disorder.

LEONTES.

I fear, not ;
But what I can, will try.

[*Exit with Attendants.*

HYLAS.

Look to the boy.
How fare the wounded ?

ATTENDANT.

Doracles yet lives ;
His hurt, I think, not mortal.

HYLAS.

Tend him well.
And is not this Demetrius ? Slain ! — that soul
Of turbulence is fled.

EVADNE (*aside*).

Are parted ghosts
Compelled to wander here again, and gaze,
As I do, on the mischiefs they have wrought ?

HYLAS.

My pretty youth, why dost thou look so pale ?
Danger is past, and thou hast done thy King
Service beyond thine years. I love thee well,
And will not part from thee. Come, thou shalt find
I am not terrible as thy fancies read,
And to be loved none ever had more need.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *In Pausanias' House.**Enter PAUSANIAS and ZENOPHILA.*

PAUSANIAS.

Dry up thy tears, my child ; be comforted.
All shall be well ; the King is generous,
Prompt to forgive, with soon-spent ire.

ZENOPHILA.

Alas !

I blame my own impatient, angry humour.
Had I been gentler, I might have restrained
Poor Doracles' rash frenzy ; but I stung him
To try that fatal course.

PAUSANIAS.

His punishment

I trust will make him wiser. Would these broils
Might, with Demetrius, have received their death-
blow.

Enter a Servant.

SERVANT.

A lady, Sir,—I think, Olympias,
Requests to speak with you.

PAUSANIAS.

O, show her in.

(Enter OLYMPIAS.)

Welcome, dear lady ; what hath brought you back
To this distracted court ?

OLYMPIAS.

O my good lord,

I bring more terror and amaze than ever
Found elsewhere room.—But first I have a tale
For your most private ear — yet stay, Zenophila ;
You well may share it.—Know, Evadne lives.

ZENOPHILA.

O miracle of joy !

PAUSANIAS.

Lives, sayest thou ?
My sense cannot contain 't — am I distraught,
Or didst thou say, indeed, Evadne lives ?

OLYMPIAS.

She lived but yesterday — this is mine anguish,
That now I know not where.

PAUSANIAS.

Ye blest immortals,
Let me not be deceived ! Did we not see
Her cold, pale corse invested for the tomb ?
Was it a dream that with funereal fires
Dazzled mine aching sight ?

OLYMPIAS.

No ; these all were,
Or so appeared. Thou knowest, on that sad night,
Alone I watched beside the couch, where lay
What seemed the soul-deserted shrine of all
That made life lovely — awful hung the gloom ;
My breathings feared to break its stillness dread ;
When, O my friends, a sigh burst on mine ear —
Another — from that pallid form they came !
It stirred—the eyes unclosed—she raised herself—

Looked sadly round, then sinking softly down,
 Again lay motionless. — My thought was gone —
 With terror stupified; but oh! she spoke, —
 It was Evadne's voice; and — Art thou there,
 She said — Olympias? tell me, my Olympias,
 What hath befallen? — hush! I know it all —
 These flowers — these tapers dim, these cerements
 white —

I have been dead; — O wherefore to return
 Again to life's turmoil? Recovering speech,
 I would have called attendance, would have
 made

Resound the palace with her restoration;
 But rising suddenly, she, with clasped hands
 And streaming eyes, fell on my neck, imploring,
 If I held dear her ransomed being, or wished
 To snatch from desperation, I would hide it.
 Let Hylas wear the crown he coveteth,
 She said, whilst I unknown, retired, may find
 Peace yet unfound.

PAUSANIAS.

O matchless constancy!

Thou didst consent?

OLYMPIAS.

Could I do otherwise?

Remonstrance was in vain. In brief, assisted
 By one old, trusted servant, all our plan
 Succeeding, to the forest we retreated, —
 For more concealment, she in boy's disguise.

PAUSANIAS.

Ha! as a boy disguised?

OLYMPIAS.

Yes, even thou

May'st pass her unobserved — her flowing locks
Bound up beneath a tasselled cap. Woe 's me,
The worst remains to tell — since yesterday
I have not seen her, every search is vain.

PAUSANIAS.

Since yesterday! — it must be so — a youth
Returned with Hylas, such as you describe —
Is with him now.

OLYMPIAS.

With him? that ruthless man,
Implacable and lawless. — O my child!
How can we help, how rescue her?

PAUSANIAS.

Your fears

Exaggerate her peril. He is not
The monster you suppose. Of late, oppressed
With sadness or remorse, he sits alone,
And, as I hear, none but this gentle boy
Can soothe his melancholy.

ZENOPHILA.

It is certain

He is much changed.

OLYMPIAS.

O that this might prove
Our sought-for princess! yet I tremble till
I see her,—know her safe. Shall we not go?

PAUSANIAS.

We must be cautious. Joy and fear contend
So strongly here, none dare presage the end.

[*Exeunt.*]SCENE IV. *The Cabinet.**Enter HYLAS and EVADNE (disguised).*

HYLAS.

Transcendant vision ! I again behold thee !
Here let me gaze for ever ; let me feed
Upon thy changeless beauty, till it sink
Deep in my soul, and chase the demons there.
Oh, that my being might be thus absorbed
From every other sense ! If I go forth
And mix in crowds, still, ever in my sight
Glides the wan spectre of my victim, mute,
And piteous from the tomb. But thou remainest,
The same in tranquil immortality,
Smiling at human strife.

EVADNE (*aside*).

O, might I comfort him !

HYLAS.

Art thou there, Daphnis ? Turn thine eyes, my
boy,
And tell me didst thou ever yet behold,
Or hast imagined, such a gracious form,
So like divinity ?

EVADNE.

'Tis a fair picture.

HYLAS.

Fie, thou art dull.

EVADNE.

Pardon me, Sir, in truth,
I marvel what so moves you in a piece
Of senseless canvass, where the painter's skill
Hath curiously mixed up his diverse colours,
To imitate, what even from Nature's hand
Is but a silly gaud, pleasing the sight
One hour, to perish straight and be forgotten.

HYLAS.

What witchcraft is there in his tone, his eye,
Enforcing silence though his words offend ?
From other lips they would seem blasphemy.
No more ; 'tis idleness.

EVADNE.

I will be grave ;
And so reprove you better. Say, this were
The portrait of one dead, who loved you well,
And watcheth o'er you from beyond the grave ;
Think you her spirit would not grieve, beholding
Her memory your bane ? O, Sir, disturb not,
With vain lament, Elysium's far repose.

HYLAS.

Thou little knowest. — No, my misery should
Appease her injured shade ; so groans and tears
Should fill up all the measure of my days,
Till they constrain forgiveness ; — but 'tis vain,
She will not hear me ! —

Daphnis, dost thou love me ?

EVADNE.

I cannot tell — I would with joy lay down
My life to give you ease.

HYLAS.

That were unwise ;
For thou canst not already have found cause
To weary of it. In good sooth, my life
Grows burdensome, unprofitable, seared
To th' inmost core — a thing unmeet for thy
Young contemplations.

Enter Servant.

SERVANT.

Sir, the Lord Pausanias.

HYLAS.

Let him come in.

Enter PAUSANIAS.

PAUSANIAS.

Permit me to approach you
With solemn gratulations for your safety
From recent peril.

HYLAS.

It is much, my lord,
That even here my safety is your care.
Some were concerned, methinks, in whom you hold
A dearer interest.

PAUSANIAS.

For Doracles

I would entreat your royal clemency.

He mourns his crime and late delusion more
Than the expected doom.

HYLAS.

I freely pardon
My share in his offence, and recommend him,
Should your fair daughter not refuse the charge,
Unto her keeping.

PAUSANIAS.

We are all your debtors.
I have another message, with your favour.
Is not this Daphnis?

HYLAS.

Yes ; my young preserver.

PAUSANIAS.

Fair youth, your mother, half distracted by
Your absence, waits without the door, impatient
Till she behold you safe, whose supposed loss,
Not in reproof I speak it, hath wrought much
Unutterable woe.

EVADNE (*aside*).

I am discovered.

HYLAS.

It was my doing. Let us see this mother.

PAUSANIAS.

Excuse her, sir ; the first outpourings of
Maternal chidings and delight would prove
Unmeet for this high presence.

HYLAS.

Go, then, dear boy ;
But come again ; and say what may I do

To pleasure thee or aught thou lovest—'tis done.
Thou weepest ! Why this burst of grief ?

EVADNE.

Alas !

I must for ever leave thee ; not again
On earth we meet. Farewell, and know, thy hand
Hath plucked the barbed arrow out, and closed
A long-inflicted wound. [Exit.

HYLAS.

What means the boy ?

No matter — he is gone ; and so 'twere best.
My love should now be fatal, as my hate
Hath been.

PAUSANIAS.

Great Sir, you overmuch indulge
This melancholy humour ; let me pray you
To be yourself again. Why should this picture
Hang here to keep alive the sad remembrance
Of buried sorrow ?

HYLAS.

Grudge me not this solace

A little while ; or, if not as a solace,
For penance thou wilt not refuse my claim.

PAUSANIAS.

O vanity of life ! I can but smile
To see how human wishes contradict
The aims themselves created. When that form
Was animate, instinct with happy being,
You held it but an hindrance in your path,
A barrier to your pride ; but now, laid low,

Mouldering in dust, it is a pretty fiction
To solemnize affliction for the loss
Which makes you prosperous.

HYLAS.

Thou doest well,
Old man, upbraiding show. Shall I parade
Remorse to dubious pity, when the cure
Lies ready in its proof?

PAUSANIAS.

One proof seems light,
Because impossible. Could'st thou recall
Evadne from her grave, how swift would rise
The image of thy perilled throne, and choke
The half-uttered invocation.

HYLAS.

It is said
That Hercules, our mighty ancestor,
Descending to the shades, brought back by force,
Whom Death had seized his prey. — That down-
ward path,
Sure of access, is daily trodden still.

PAUSANIAS.

But for the re-ascent? — It may be, Sir,
A trial not imaginary waits you ;
And restitution is at hand. Remember,
I hold you pledged when I present th' occasion.

[*Exit.*

HYLAS.

Some sage device to salve a stricken conscience
With facile forms of piety — some petty

Display of foolish clemency — good soul,
Providing these, he dares to probe mine anguish !
He'll find 'tis easier feed a raging fire,
Than to allay its fury.

(*Enter LEONTES.*)

So, Leontes,
Thou art returned at last. How sped thy mission ?

LEONTES.

It is fulfilled ; we bring you Polydore.

HYLAS.

That's well. — Where stays he ? Came he willingly ?

LEONTES.

I grieve to tell you in what manner, Sir.
When by your orders we pursued his flight
Thro' the dense forest, soon we lost all trace
Of him we sought, and shortly added loss
Of our own path, till darkness drawing on,
We turned for shelter to a woodman's hut ;
Who, at first break of day, with ready guidance
Showed the poor maniac's haunt. We found him
there,

Stretched on a mossy bank, upslanting to
The eastern ray, beneath wide-spreading boughs ;
The clustering woodbine over-head had strewed
Her honeyed blossoms on his cheek, that wore
The impress of a smile, mournfully strange
To its care-wasted hue. We feared to break
The unwonted slumbers deep ; but vain our fears ;
He slept to wake no more — his harassed soul

Had left its battered tenement, which, raised
With unavailing care and pity, we
Have hither borne along.

HYLAS.

So ; he is happy—

He is at rest.

My friend, thou wilt provide
Whatever fits a prince's obsequies.
Let him be royally interred — omit not
One meet solemnity — beside Evadne ;
And when all's done, Leontes, over them
Build up a monument, whereon, well told,
The story of their doom shall win for both
Regrets and tears immortal. Next forget not
Grave embassy to Macedon, relating
Her loss in these events, and how you paid
Mourning and honour due unto her dead.

LEONTES.

My prince, is this a testament you leave me ?
Take you no part in aught ?

HYLAS.

Be satisfied ;

I shall be present ; not may-be i' the vein
For such observances. I have offended
The avenging gods ; therefore, before that tomb,
Upon the altar mean to offer up
Atoning sacrifice. But go, delay not
The preparations.

LEONTES.

I am loth to leave you
With such dark thoughts, unlike your wonted mood ;

Musing on what is past redress — accusing
Yourself of Fate's designs.

HYLAS.

Return, when done
As I gave order ; then shalt thou know more.

LEONTES.

I obey.

[*Exit.*

HYLAS.

Farewell ; now am I with the dead ;
With them for evermore. How shall I greet ye,
Blest spirits, in yon shadowy land ? how make
My peace before we meet ? Should I present
My life in expiation, since that life
Hath become hateful, — since to wear out thus
Long, lingering ages in despair and horror,
Were my worst chastisement ? — And thou look'st
down,

Smiling upon my misery, with mien
Serenely glorious as those heavens I must
Behold no more. Ah, cruel ! fiends might melt,
Relenting at my tortures ; — but my wrongs
To thee were fiendlike — ay, smile on, smile on !
Thou art avenged. Perish, guilty soul !
Why this delay ? none other witness needs —
No time more fit. — Thus I rejoin thee, thus,
Evadne —

(Towards the end of the speech EVADNE appears behind in her proper dress, followed by PAUSANIAS, OLYMPIAS, and ZENOPHILA, she rushes forward as he is about to stab himself.)

EVADNE.

Oh, Hylas ! save him — Hylas —

HYLAS.

Ah ! what is this ?— Eternal heaven !

PAUSANIAS.

Look up,

My lord, behold the close of your despair.

HYLAS.

O bitter mockery ! why have ye done this ?

PAUSANIAS.

Be less amazed ; there is no mockery :

Evadne's living self doth stand before you.

Speak to her — see —

HYLAS.

Evadne ! can the grave

Give up its dead ? (*kneeling.*)

Fair being, Oh ! thou art

Most like whom I have worshipped as no more.

Art thou returned to tell me that I die,

Accepted and forgiven ? Or dost thou live ?

Is it no phantom that deludes my sight,

But breathing life ? still, bid me die, unworthy

This wild excess of happiness.

EVADNE.

Oh, Hylas,

Be happy, thou ! only for this I died —

For this, seek life again. Let not my hopes

Prove ever frustrate.

PAUSANIAS.

No ; henceforth all's well ;

But yet he needs assurance of the joy
That seemed impossible. And here is one
Can show how all things came to pass.

HYLAS (*to OLYMPIAS*).

Good lady !
The mists begin to break. — Who then was
Daphnis ?

PAUSANIAS.

Ev'n whom you see ; none other.

HYLAS.

O, most dear !
How much do I not owe thee ?

Enter LEONTES—afterwards CASSANDER, etc.

LEONTES.

Where is the King ?
Strange rumours are abroad.—What do I see ?

HYLAS.

My friend, behold, who claims thy homage here ?

LEONTES.

Do I not dream ? the Queen !

CASSANDER.

Dear long-lost Sovereign !

LEONTES.

These wonders overpass belief—but hark !
Reports have reached the people, and they press
Tumultuously about the palace, shouting
Evadne, some — some, Hylas.

HYLAS.

Come then, my Queen ;
Let me restore thee to their loving wishes,
And give — this boon I crave — the first example
Of renovated faith, where only due.

EVADNE.

Not so ; I left the sceptre to your hands—
It is no longer mine.

PAUSANIAS.

But undivided,
Possessed by both in one ; unless I err,
So shall your throne, your power, full soon, in
glory
By union be perfected.

EVADNE.

Go then, Pausanias ;
Content the expectant throng — inform them how
Have these events befallen.

HYLAS.

He who hath sunk
Deep in the gulf of utter hopelessness,
Alone may picture half my transport, thus
Lift up to bliss. Star of my destiny,
Guided by thee, my wandering soul hath steered
Thro' storms of wild desire — thro' shoals of
pride —
At last secure, in calmest haven moored,
Its future course is dedicated thine.

EVADNE.

Alas ! my friend, by passion blindly led,

We wrought our downfall, had not higher powers
Shaped our frail purposes to happier end
Than we could have devised. Now port is won,
Let us forget not whence deliverance shone.

PAUSANIAS.

For ever blest, illustrious pair, remain ;
For ever blest, the realm wherein you reign !



THE TRAGICAL STORY
OF
DAPHLES AND DORACLES,

From W. Warner's "Albion's England," 1596.

KING AGANIPPUS ere his death had with his lords
decreed
His only daughter Daphles should in empire him
succeed.
A fairer ladie liu'd not then, and now her like doth
lack,
And nature, thinke I, neuer will a second she com-
pact.
The King intombed, Daphles of his scepter was
possest :
And one there was, a noble man, that could it not
digest.
Who (for he was of fame and force) did bid her
battaile, and
In doubtfull end of victorie their ciuill quarrels stand.
At length the Argiue Maiden Queene she Doracles
subdued :
But (Cacus) of this stratagem a tragedie ensued.
Now loues, not launces came in vse, the man that
lost the day,

And lies in chaines, left her in cares : her conquest
was his pray.

Full often did she blame her selfe for louing him
her foe,

But oftner thought she it more blame not to haue
erred so.

Thus whom in campe she loathed late, in chaines
she loued now,

And thought him sure, because so sure. To princes
prisoners bow

Thinks she : and watching fitting time, vnto the
prison went,

Where at the dore of such his lodge a many teares
she spent.

But entring, when her eyes beheld the image of
her hart,

To her still peerelesse, though his bands had altred
him in part,

She casting down her bashfull eyes stood sence-
less then a space,

Yeat what her tonguelesse loue adiorned was
extant in her face :

And now the goaler left to her the prisoner and
the place.

Then, cheering carefull Doracles, let it suffice
(quoth shee)

That I repent me of thy bands, and frankly set
thee free.

And let that grace grace-out the rest, for more
remaines behind

Then, being said, may decent seeme to such as
faults will find.

Myselfe, my land, my loue, my life, and all what
so is mine,

Possesse: yet loue, and saue my life, that now
haue sau'd thine.

Then sownes she at his sullen feete, that yet
abode in thrall:

Which to auoid, he faintly rubs his liuer on his
gall:

And with his hand, not with his heart, did reare
her sinking downe,

And faining to approue her choice, had promise of
the crowne.

But neither crowne, nor countries care, nor she
(worth all the rest)

Nor grace, nor dutie, reconcile whom enuie had
possest.

No sooner was he got at large, and wealth sup-
plied his lack,

But he to seeke her ouerthrow to forren aids did
pack.

Demaund, now how the wronged Queene digested
such her wrong,

But aske if she, the tidings tolde, to heare them
liu'd so long.

She liu'd in deede, yet sowned oft, and sowning
ouerpast,

From her mistempered head she teares her louely
tresses fast.

And beateth on her iuorie breasts, and casts her on
the ground,
And wrings her hands, and scricheth out, and
flingeth vp and downe.
Her ladies pittying her distresse had got their
Queene to rest :
From whenceforth outward signes and sighs her
inward grieffe exprest,
Her sparing diet, seldome sleepe, her silence, and
what not !
Had framed her now right loue-like, when thus
to him she wrot.

What fault of mine hath caused thy flight doth
rest in cloudes to me,
But faultles haue I heard of none, and faultie may
I be.

Yet not my scepter, but myselfe, haue kingly
suters sought,
Did all amisse, saue thou alone, that settest
both at nought ?
At nought, said I ? Yea well I said, because so
early cougth
One crime but cite, and I for it will shead a million
teares :

And to be penitent of faults with it a pardon beares.
Ah, Doracles, if our extreames, thy malice and my
loue,
The former euer ill shall not the latters good re-
moue.

I heare thou doest frequent the warres, and war
 thou wilt with mee,
 Forgetfull that my Argiue men impatient war-
 riours bee :
 Sweet, hassard not the same to sword that loue
 doth warrant thee.

Ech speare that shal but crosse thy helme hath
 force to craise my hart :
 But if thou bleede, of that thy blood my fainting
 soule hath part.
 With thee I liue, with thee I dye, with thee I
 loose or gaine.
 Liue safe therefore, for in thy life consist the liues
 of twaine.
 Most wisely valiant are those men that backe their
 armed steeds
 In beaten paths, vse boarded tylthes to break their
 staffe-like heads :
 Wheare not the dint of wounding launce, but some
 deuise of loue,
 Sans danger, hath sufficient wait their manhoods to
 approue.
 Wheare braue aspects of louely Dames Tantara to
 the fight,
 Whose forms perhaps are weg'd in harts, whē
 fauours wag in sight,
 Whearas the victors prize is praise, and trumpets
 sound ech blow,
 Wheare all is well, that seemes but well, in cou-
 rage or in show.

Wheare ladies doffe their champions helmes, and
 kisse wheare beaunders hid,
 Retire therefore, sweet heart retire : or, if thou wilt
 be arm'd,

Then fight as these where all things make that all
 escape vn harm'd.

Such manhood is a merriment : things present are
 regarded :

Not thousand drammes of bloud in warre, one drop
 is here rewarded.

In few, the warres are full of woes, but here euen
 words of warre

Haue brauer grace thē works thē selues, for courts
 frō campes be far.

Than are the valiāt, who more vaine ? Than
 cowards who more wise ?

Not men that trauell Pegasus, but Fortunes fooles
 doe rise.

Methinks I see how churlish lookes estrange thy
 cheerefull face,

Methinks thy gestures, talke, and gate, haue
 changed their wonted grace.

Methinks thy sometimes nimble limbs with armour
 now are lame,

Methinks I see how scars deforme where swords
 before did maime :

I see thee faint with summer's heat and droup
 with winter's cold :

I see thee not the same thou art, for young thou
 seemest old : [art too bold :

I see not, but my soule doth feare, in fight thou

I sorrow, lastly, to haue seene whom now I wish to
see,

Because I see loues oratresse pleads tediously to
thee.

If words, nor weepings, loue, nor lines, if ease nor
toyle in fight

May winne thee from a pleasing ill, yet come thou
to my sight.

Perchance my presence may dissuade, or partner-
ship delight,

But wo am I, dead paper pleads, a senceles thing
of woe :

It cannot weepe, nor wring the hands, but say that
she did so.

And saith so vncredited, or if, then thought of
corse :

Then thus, because not passionate, to paper failes
remorse.

O that my griefes, my sighes, and teares, might
muster to thy viewe,

Thē woes, not words, thē paine, not pē should
vouch my writing true.

Yeat fare thou well, whose farewell brings such
fare-ill vnto me :

Thy farewell lacks a welcome home, and welcome
shalt thou be.

These lines, subscribed with her name, when Do-
racles did viewe,

He was so far from liking them, that loathing did
ensue.

And, least that hope should ease her heart, or he
not seem unkinde,
In written tables he to her returned thus his minde.

The bees of Hybla beare, besides sweet hony smart-
ing stings,
And beautie doth not want a baite that to repent-
ance brings
Cōtent thee, Daphles, mooles take mads, but mē
know mooles to catch,
And euer wakes the Dawlean bird to ward the
sloe-worms watch :
I haue perus'd, I wot not what a scrole, forsooth,
of loue,
As if to Dirus in his tent should Cupid cast his
gloue.
A challenge proper to such sottes as you would
make of me,
But I disdaine to talke of loue, much more in loue
to be,
Nor thinke a Queene, in case of loue, shall tie me
to consent,
But holde the contrarie more true, and it no con-
sequent.
For persons must in passions iumpe, els loue it
proueth lame ;
Nor think I of a womans graunt but as a woers game.
Your sex withstands not place and speach : for be
she baes, or hie,
A woman's eye doth guide her wit, and not her wit
her eye.

Then senceles is he, hauing speach, that bids not
for the best :

Euen Carters Malkings will disdaine when Gentice
will disgest ;

The better match the brauer mart, and willinger is
sought :

And willing sute hath best event : so Vulcan Venus
cought.

I argue not of her estate, but set my rest on this :

That opportunitie can win the coyest she that is.

Then he that rubs her gamesome vaine, and tem-
pers toyes with arte,

Brings loue that swimmeth at her eyes, to diue
into her hart.

But since the best, at best is bad, a shrow or els a
sheepe,

Just none at all are best of all, and I from all will
keepe ;

Admit I come, and come I then because I come to
thee ?

No, when I come, my coming is contrarie sights to see.

My leasure serues me not to loue till fish as hag-
gards flie,

Till sea shall flame, till sun shall freese, tyll mor-
tal men not die,

And riuers climbing vp their bankes, shall leaue
their channels dry.

When these shall be, and I not be, then may I
chance to loue,

And then the strangest change will be that I a
louer proue.

Let beuers hide, not busses hurt, my lips, for lips
vnfit :

Let skarred limbes, not carefull loues, to honor,
honor get.

I skorne a face effeminate, but hate his bastarde
minde

That, borne a man, prepostrously by arte doth
alter kinde :

With fingers, ladie-like, with lockes, with lookes,
and gauds in print,

With fashions barbing formeles beards, and robes
that brooke no lint,

With speare in wrest, like painted Mars, frō
thought of battaille free,

With gate and grace, and euery gaude, so wo-
manly to see

As not in nature, but in name, their manhood
seems to be.

Yea sooner then that maiden hears bud on his
boyish chinne,

The furie of the fierie god doth in the foole be-
ginne,

And yeate to winne, who would be wonne, these
woo with lesser speed,

Then might be wonne a towne of warre, the croppe
not worth the seede.

But let them trauaile till they tire, and then be
ridde for jaides,

If gamesters faire, if souldiers milde, or louers true
of maides :

Who loue in sporte or, leaue in spight, or if they
stoupe to luer,
Their kindness must haue kindly vse: faults only
make them suer.
Did fancie? no, did furie? yea, hang up the
Thracian maide.
The wonders seuen should then be eyght, could
loue thee so perswade.
But loue or hate, fare ill or well: I force not of thy fare:
My welcome, which thou doest pretend shall proue
a thankelesse care.

When Daphles heard him so vnkind, she held
herself accurst:
And little lacked of so well but that her heart did
burst.
And wheare she read the churlish scrole, she fell
into a sowne,
But, brought againe vpon a bed herselfe she casteth
downe,
Not rising more: and so her loue and life together end:
Or (if I so may gesse) in death her soule did liue
his friend.
The Queene entered, and Obbit kept (as she in
charge did giue)
A knight was shipt to Calidon, wheare Doracles
did liue,
To offer him, as her bequest, the Argiue throne
and crowne.
Not that we force, or fear (quoth he) thy fauour
or thy frowne

We moue this peace, or make thee prince, but
Daphles swore vs so,

Who louing more than thou couldst hate, nor liued
nor died thy foe.

And is she dead (quoth Doracles) that liued to my
wrong ?

I gladly do accept these newes, expected for so long.
The lord and legate were imbarckt, and ship ran
vnder saile,

Vntill into the Argiue Strond the mariners did
haile.

To Daphles, by adoption, there inthronized a King.
He diuers yeares good fortune had successiue in
each thing

All friends, no foes, all wealth no want, still peace
and never strife,

And what might seeme an earthly heaven to Do-
racles was rife.

A subject, but a noble man did ritchly feast the
King.

And after meat presented him with many a sight
and thing.

Theare was a chamber in the which, portraied to
the quick,

The picture of Queene Daphles was : and deeply
did it prick

The King his conscience, and he thought her like
did not remaine :

whome her person could not pearce, her picture
now did paine.



A kissing Cupid, breathing loue into her breast,
 did hide
 Her wandering eies, whilst to her heart his
 hand a Death did guide.
 Non mœrens morior, for the mott, inchased was
 beside.
 Her curtesie and his contempt he called them to
 minde,
 And of her beautie in himselfe he did a chaos finde.
 Recalling eke his late degree, and reckning his
 desert,
 He could not think (or faintly thought) his loue
 to sterne her heart,
 And to the maker of the feast did such his
 thoughts impart.
 And doubtles your grace, the feaster said, if
 Daphles lou'd or no?
 I wish (I hope I wish no harme) she had not lou'd
 so,
 Or you not loathed as you did ; then she had liued
 yet :
 To what her latest speech did tend I neuer shall
 forget.
 My selfe, with diuers noble men whose teares
 bewraid our care
 Was present, when her dying tongue of you did
 thus declare
 My hap (quoth she) is simply bad that cannot
 haue, nor hope ;
 Was euer wretch (I wretch except) held to so skant
 a scope.

I see him roue at other markes, and I vnmarkt
to be ;

I find my fault, but followe it whilest death doth
followe me.

Ah death (my lords) dispaire is death, and death
must ransome blisse,

Such ransome pleaseth Doracles and Daphles pliant
is.

Not bootlesse then since breathles strait sweet loue
doth flames contriue

The which shall burne me vp at once that now doe
burne aliuie.

Alas (then did she pause in teares) that Doracles
were by,

To take it from his eyes, not eares, that I for him
doe die :

At least, perhaps, he would confesse my loue to
be no lie.

But (want wit I) offensive sights to Doracles I
craue :

Long liue deare hart, not minding me, when I am
laid in graue.

And you (my lords) by those same goddes whose
sight I hope anon,

I conjure, that ye him inuest your King when I
am gon.

Alonely say I liu'd and died to him a loue true,
And that my parting ghost did sound sweet Doracles
adue.

A sigh concluding such her words, she closed vp her
eye;
Not one of vs, beholding it, that seemed not to
die.
Thus to your Grace I leaue to gesse how tragick
Daphles died:
In loue, my lord, yea louing you that her of loue
denied.
The picture, and this same discourse afford sufficient
woe
To him that maimed in his minde did to his pallace
goe.
Theare Doracles did set abroach a world of things
forgot:
What meanest thou, man? Ah frantick man, how
art thou ouershot
(He said) to hate the substance then, and loue the
shadow now,
Her painted board, whose amorous hart did breake
whilst I not bow:
And couldst thou, churlish wretch, cōtemne the loue
of such a Queene?
O gods, I graunt for such contempt I iustly bide
your teene.
Her onlly beautie (worthy Joue, that now on me
hath power)
Was worthie of farre worthier loue, without a
further dower.
But gaze thou on her senceles signe, whose selfe
thou madest thy pray,

And gazing perish : for thy life is debt to her decay.
Time going on, greefe it grewe on, of dolour sprung
dispaire,

When Doracles to Daphles tombe did secretly re-
paire :

Theare (teares a preface to the rest) these only
words he spake :

Thy loue was losse, for losse my life in recom-
pense do take,

Deare Daphles, so a daggers stab a tragedie did
make.

P O E M S.



1

2

3

THE SLEEPLESS NIGHT.

WRITTEN AT AN EARLY AGE.

THE summer moon was in the sky,
Deep midnight's stilly hour drew nigh,
And all was hushed, and all around
In slumber and in silence bound;
When seeking first my quiet bed
With weary mind and drooping head,
Not sleep, though rest I found.
For many a thought awakes within,
While earth in shroud unconscious lies,
From slumber's chains the heart to win,
And thronging recollections rise;
Like spectres from the shadowy tomb
They flit across the harassed brain,—
Mine is the power to make them come,
But not, with master spell, again
To bid th' intruders back retire,
That thus arrayed in joy or pain,
Alike molesting night's domain,
Mock the much-wearied soul's desire.
Let then my burning eyes uncloze,
No longer wooing coy repose,

To watch awhile the moon's pale beam
Soft thro' the half-closed curtains stream,
And mark the shadow of the leaves
 Stirred by the light wind's feeble sighing—
Sure it is some spirit grieves,—
 On those gales his moans are dying ;
Yet in thy placid light serene,
Seemeth, O silver-shafted Queen !
That sorrow's cloud might never dare
To dwell, nor trace of earth-born care.
Thine is the still, the noiseless time,
 Sacred to rest, nor rest alone,
But solemn thought and dreams sublime
 To day's distracting scenes unknown.
Now calm reflection doth unfold
 The ravelled webs that passion wove,
And holiest meditations hold
 Discourse with things above ;
While on halcyon plume descending,
 O'er th' unruffled spirit steal
Peace and balmy quiet, blending
 Spells the stormiest waves to seal.
But still wears on the midnight hour —
 Sleep's hovering phantoms still betray ;
To one with live-long vigil tired,
The brightest vision ere inspired
By fancy free, would not repay
For dear oblivion's banished sway,
 And thought-subduing power.

The waning moon is past and gone,
Dim darkness reassumes her throne,
And pealing on the breathless air,
Faint from the distant town I hear

The sullen bell toll one.

What stillness reigns supreme ! how deep
Th' unyielding gloom around me spread !

O, ancient night, now dost thou keep
Sole empire, void, eternal, dread !

Eternal — yes, might well beseem

That name thy all-pervading course ;
And well might human wisdom deem

Thee end of being, as the source.

From thee all things sprang forth, in thee

All earthly things resolved must be ;

And oft as thy returning shade

Doth duly heaven and earth pervade,

We own the image of that gloom,

Where nature hastes to find a tomb ;—

This pause profound would seem to say,

Already hath she past away !

'Tis the soul's solitude — she soars

Now far, on contemplation's wing ;

The wide expanse of thought explores,

And bids old Time his volumes bring,

And ope their ample stores.


Past ages rise and give to view

Their mighty dead in long review,

Beneath my boundless glance ;

Deeds unforgotten, names renowned,
Man's vast designs by fortune crowned,
Or sport of 'whelming chance.
Alas! where'er its wanderings turn,
No resting-place may thought discern;
But scenes with guilt and misery rife,
Vain glory, ineffectual strife,
Triumphant wrong, remorseless fate,
The awful lesson still repeat,
Neglected ever till too late.
Perplexed with doubt, with anguish shaded,
The splendour of the pageant faded,
Leaves nought but bitterness behind, —
Again the exhausted, o'erwrought mind
Within its prison sinks, to find
No feeling but of weariness,
No wish but for forgetfulness.

Oh, tediously with leaden pace,
The moments slow move on!
When will fair morn their presence chase?
Will night be never done?
This brooding darkness, black as death,
Weighs heavy on my faltering breath;
This noiseless void — what would I give
To catch some tone of things that live!
I listen, till each pulse's beating
Is audibly the strained ear meeting.
Hush! rustling creep across the room,
Methinks a low sound I perceive;



A flame gleams flickering thro' the gloom —
Or doth false fantasy deceive ?
Vague terrors with delusion strong
Thick on the imagination throng ;
Arrest the life-blood in my veins,
And hold each sense in icy chains.
Why am I thus disquieted ?
What means this nameless, causeless dread ?
Now, now its transient sway is o'er ;
The agony of fear subsides,
And deeper calm succeeding, glides.
Smiling at what alarmed before,
I lay me down to rest once more ;
Soon to turn, then turn again,
And sigh for sleep, and sigh in vain.

But hark ! what notes salute mine ear,
The phantoms of unrest dispelling ?
The matin cock crows glad and clear,
Of night's desired departure telling.
Look forth again — 'tis darkness all —
‡ Nay — now a faint, dim shadow breaks
Across the late impervious pall,
With wan, uncertain, wavering streaks.
Still-spreading hues of twilight grey,
Slow o'er the dusky bounds encroach,
The giant lingering shades decay,
Dispersing wide at their approach.
Meanwhile from leafy covert nigh,
With chirp and twitter low,

The little songsters cheerfully
Their early rising show,
And here and there, a gush of song
Bursts forth the dewy bowers among.
Yes, it is the day-break nearing,
The herald pale of dawn appearing.
Silence and darkness steal away,
And now their footsteps seem too fleet.
From vigils long, the eye of day,
All unrefreshed, how shall I meet ?
O, gentle sleep ! unheeded, why
Thus ever must I call on thee ?
Ah ! wherefore dost thou still deny
With silken band to veil the eye
From pain and sickness free ?
No anxious cares my mind perplex,
No vain imaginations vex ;
Nor blighted hopes my peace destroy,
Nor memory of departed joy.
I can without repining bear
The common ills mankind must share,
And hate the selfish tear that flows
In cherished grief for fancied woes.
One earthly thought, one sole desire,
Here ever dwells alone ;
Here lights its unextinguished fire,
In secret nursed, unknown ;
But sooner may the stars that glow
So clear, so calm in heaven above,
Disturb the tranquil scene below,
And fierce and baleful prove ;

Than that hope's serenest rays
Molest contentment's sober ways ;
So cold, so distant, though so bright,
It warms not while I watch its light,
Nor dazzles nor betrays.
And yet — but no ! no more of this —
Let me these idle dreams dismiss,
And gazing on the opening morn,
Inhale her cool reviving dews,
And feel her gales fresh life diffuse,
Of nature's self new-born.
Oh, very fair her tearful face,
Where smiles with sadness seem in strife ;
Just springing from the cold embrace
Of sullen gloom to infant life !
In thin grey clouds its dim head veiling,
See, yon planet fast is paling,
Last of the starry train ;
While in the east how soft and bright
Melt the warm tints of gradual light
With many a rosy stain !
And slowly with those colours blending,
The silvery mists from earth ascending,
Mark where thro' meadows stretched below
Fair Severn's winding waters flow.
Drooping beneath a dewy shower,
Like thick-strown pearls profusely shed,
Each slender blade, each tree, each flower
Hangs to the ground its heavy head ;
These were sad night's fast-falling tears ;
But when the glorious sun appears,

Her mournful gems, as diamonds blaze
All glittering, shall reflect his rays.

The horizon's orient portals view,
Intenser lustre still unfold,
And glowing waves of crimson hue,
Blush o'er that sea of liquid gold.
Earth and sky in mute communion
Seem their God's approach to wait ;
Soon with joy their blest reunion
Many a voice shall gratulate.
Not yet — in deep oblivion still,
The world lies hushed ; no eye, save mine,
Surveys this scene, whose glories fill
My heart with transport near divine.
These breezes fan no other brow,
None else their breath of incense know —
Not yet of sleep the season past ;
They say its morning dreams are soundest,
Just ere dissolved its spells profoundest ;
And ev'n on me, perhaps, at last
Their welcome influence may be cast.

Again the well-smoothed pillow prest,
My weary eyelids close,
And now with better hope address,
Invoke once more repose.
Gales transcendant fragrance flinging,
Floods of golden light disspread,
Unseen choirs in rapture singing,
Mingling wave around my head.

Linger awhile, ye forms that rise
In brightness on the entranced sight !
Ye airs that breathe of Paradise,
And lull the spirit in delight !
Soon is the gay illusion banished ;
Too soon the fairy vision's vanished :
On every side, above, below,
Discordant sounds of life awake,
And hurrying feet move to and fro,
And voices loud the stillness break.
Now Quiet from her shrine is driven,
She durst no longer here remain ;
Nor hath to me the blessing given,
To seek for further were in vain.
No, not one wonted interval
Of sweet unconsciousness may fall,
This brain to steep — these senses close,
Fast locked with ivory key.
The flaring sunbeams mock repose,
And on the lingerer seem to call,
Whom weariness doth late enthrall,
And slumber long doth flee :
Arise ! the busy day's begun ;
Silence is fled, the night is done ;
There is no rest for thee.

THE PORTRAIT.*

“WHY dost thou fix so earnestly
“Thy gaze! I fain would seek,
“What is it calls that sudden sigh,
“And bids the tear start to thine eye,
“The colour to thy cheek?”

The reason would'st thou understand,
Approach and gaze with me.
“A form portrayed by pencil grand,
“Beneath some mighty master's hand,
“His noblest work, I see.”

And is that all? and know'st thou not
Whose form is pictured there?
Those traits once seen were ne'er forgot;
But read them well — thou'lt soon allot
The honoured name they bear.

* First published in *Blackwood's Magazine*.

"That dauntless brow might best beseem
"A warrior's daring mood ;
"The lip of pride, the eye's dark gleam
"Show firm resolve, command supreme,
"Danger and foes subdued."

These mark, indeed, the conqueror tried
On many a well-fought plain ;
But canst thou nought discern, beside
High deeds and military pride ?
O turn, and look again.

"Calm wisdom on that front sublime,
"Care on the faded cheek,
"A glance to pierce the depths of time,
"And rule men's hearts thro' every clime,
"The stateman's soul bespeak."

Look yet once more — peruse aright
The mind charac'tered here :
Greatness, above ambition's flight,
Or faction's rage, or envy's blight ;
Justice and truth severe.

Still loftier praise his deeds afford,
Might I such meed bestow,
Blest hero ! whose redeeming sword
Peace, safety, liberty restored —
"Enough, I know him now !"

Yes one alone might ever claim
Such splendour of renown ;
And such the unsullied, sacred fame
Dix's consecrate *his* deathless name,
And every action crown.

Then marvel not my bosom glowed
His glory to behold ;
And sighed, to think ingratitude,
And base detraction's viper brood
Even here blind warfare hold ;

But vain — as in th' illustrious hour
His victories that seal'd,
When Europe's fate did darkly lour,
Unharm'd amid the fiery shower,
Her 'venger and her shield,

He stood serene — still shall he stand,
By civil broils unmoved,
The light, the safeguard of the land,
'Gainst foreign foe, or trait'rous band,
In peace, in war, approved.

So let his fame all nations spread,
All hearts his praise avow ;
Bring laurels for his glorious head,
And bid immortal amarynths shed
Their honours on his brow.

THE SEVENTEENTH OF MAY.

(THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S RESIGNATION AND LORD
GREY'S RETURN TO OFFICE, IN 1832.)

For the rest, the Reformers are triumphant—the barriers
are broken down—the waters are out—who can predict their
course or tell the devastation they will occasion ?

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE.

WITHIN the solemn hall of state,
Of peers and chiefs a princely band,
The senators of Britain sate,
The glory of earth's proudest land ;
For they were there, the deathless crown
Of fame whose deeds had won ;
And they, whose names of old renown
In history's pages shone,
Whose sires for freedom fought and died,
Who now, in fiercer conflicts tried,
Do as their sires had done.

Yes ; these a nobler strife have shared,
Our sacred birthrights to maintain,

Thus are the darkest days was done,
 The messages now destined to pass
 But distant with their summons grew
 In that mysterious hour :
 Yonkers and Westchester met a few,
 Where in their ranks assembled
 They see their morning might and awe,
 They saw the triumph of the day.
 The main's destruction sealed.

When in the midst advancing, speaks !
 Where grief and fear and shame contend.
 What voice the sudden silence breaks,
 And thus ev'n death's rage attend !
 We'll know we him — a few unknown —
 Is truth and glory done ;
 He wins in greatness stands alone,
 Whom wine and gold reverse.
 Behind him, wringed, deserted now,
 Yet more of sorrow on his brow
 Than anger such appear.

A tottering throne, a ruined realm,
 The sacred altar's threatened lot,
 His order — angry floods o'erwhelm —
 He might have saved, — and they would not.
 'Tis now too late ; ev'n he withdraws
 From the unequal fight ;
 Yet more than conqueror, could applause
 Or gratitude requite.

The matchless worth none dare revile,
But prove themselves too base, too vile,
For aught but scorn and slight.

Turn to his foes' exulting bands —

Lo, where, with live-long labours crowned,
Beyond ev'n hope, their leader stands !

A joyless triumph hath he found.

Thou, Wellington ! whom deeds of war

The lord of victory name,

Defeated thus, art greater far

Than in thine hour of fame ;

Thy praise is not of mortal mood,

Nor death, nor man's ingratitude

Can quench its perfect flame.

But as for *thee* ! whose brows the wreath

Of false success, unhallowed wear,

Who would not choose obscurest death

Far rather than thine honours share ?

Did thirst of power thy soul inflame,

Or couldst thou not endure

A faction-leader's transient name ?

Well hast thou found the cure ;

Thy King deceived, enslaved, betrayed,

Thy glorious land in misery laid,

No fleet renown secure.

For this thou 'st sold thyself the tool

Of fierce sedition's vilest brood,

~~And fondly deem it ambition's fool !~~

~~They labour mainly for thy good.~~

~~They watch the demons e'er the slave~~

~~And victim of their will ;~~

~~And taught to see the power they gave,~~

~~Its destined task fulfil :~~

~~Marking thou hast triumphed ! thou hast~~

~~crush'd~~

~~The righteous sceptre into dust—~~

~~It crush'd beneath the ill.~~

But thou hast triumphed ! they are gone,

The free, the noble, and the true ;

Till foul destruction's work be done,

Th' appointed end thou must pursue.

They have left the hall, exalted seat

Of power and honour late ;

But now with infamy replete,

The scoff of scorn and hate.

The vacant throne, the title vain,

That bauble,—idle toys remain,

The mockery of state.

The setting sun's last trembling ray,

Look'd o'er the waves with lingering smile ;

That hour on freedom's latest day,

In darkness closing on our isle.

Night comes ; the gathering tempests spread

And who may dare to say



How long their fury must we dread,
How long that darkness stay ?
The land is maddening to her doom,
And rushes headlong on the tomb ;
Her rulers pave the way.

This and the preceding poem were written at a period of great political excitement, scarcely remembered perhaps in the interest of more recent events, but now matter of history.

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ERINNA.

Two thousand years their course have done,
Empires and states are past away,
And many a great and glorious one
Leaves not a vestige in decay;
Since in the groves of Mytelene
A voice arose — its echoes still
Linger, faintly heard between
The tumults and the din that fill
Life's ever-changing, busy scene.
Was it a sound to battle calling,
Of nations arming, kingdoms falling?
Of high, heroic deeds that told,
Or sage's wisdom would unfold?
No, one touch to nature true,
Hath more of immortality;
One strain the Muses may endue
To breathe while those forgotten lie.
Such was the power, such the fame
Crowns sweet Erinna's deathless name;

A gentle maiden fair and young,
Singing her native bowers among,
A brief yet ever-sounding song.
Scarce nineteen years of mortal life
 Beneath the sun her spirit grew ;
Then with deep inspiration rife,
 To happier scenes withdrew.
Earth scarce could claim her for its own,
Ere, like a dream in silence flown,
Her golden lyre must she lay down,
And newly-gathered laurel crown,
 Just spreading into light.
What name had equalled hers, had time
Spared the green bud till autumn prime
 Fulfilled its promise bright ?
Yet matchless still—the loveliest star
 In all the Muses' galaxy,
Erinna beaming from afar,
 Bright in perpetual youth we see.
For time that makes perfect will also mar,
 And life some tinge of evil borrow ;
Those soonest from its bonds set free,
 Shall share the least in sin and sorrow.
This truth the wise of old well knew,
 Though all beyond the grave's sad bourne,
In twilight wrapt and doubtful hue,
 But told that thence was no return,
They hailed it as the final rest,
The end of human woes confest.

Hail then, young favourite of Heaven !
To whom its choicest boons were given,
 Unpurchased and unwept ;
To thine enraptured gaze revealed,
Thou sawest great Nature's face unveiled,
 Then in her bosom slept.
Thou hadst not known the wearing chain
 That earthward drags th' aspiring soul —
Nor how weak frame and throbbing brain
 Its struggling fires retard, controul ;
The fever and the weariness,
And all the various ills that press,
O'erwhelming with redoubled weight
High genius and fair woman's fate.
Unharm'd by sullen envy's wrong,
Or busy slander's viper tongue,
Full many a poet loved to weave
 The halo of united praise,
That ever on thy brow shall leave
 The soft reflexion of its rays.
They say thy few short strains excel
Th' unnumbered bards whose descants swell
 The song of later days.
That like the dying swan's, thy note
Above the stream of time shall float,
 When mute their louder lays.
And breathing still one dearer token
 Of never-fading memory,

The words thou spakest, for thee are spoken,
Thine own lament awakes for thee ;
When for thy soon-o'erclouded day,
Thine early-blighted, budding wreath,
And unforgotten lyre, we say,
*Envious, indeed, art thou, O Death !

* “ *Βάσκανος ἴσσι’ Αἴδα.*”—ERIN. EPIT.

HYMNS FROM NOVALIS.

He loves and is beloved again—
Can his soul choose but be at rest ?

CHRISTIAN YEAR.

HYMN I.

WHAT might I not have been without Thee ?
Without Thee what should I have done ?
With nought but fear and grief about me,
In the wide world to stand alone ?
With unassured affections thirsting,
Darkness had o'er my future closed ;
And were my heart with anguish bursting,
On whom its cares had I reposed ?

Consumed by love and lonely yearning,
Each day like dismal night had worn ;
Still had I trod, with tears deep burning,
The path of human woes, forlorn.
From crowds by sad unquiet driven,
At home to sink beneath despair —
Ah ! who, without a friend in Heaven,
Who might earth's weary burden bear ?

Hath Christ Himself to me imparting,
Accepted me, indeed His own,—
How swift thro' shadowy horror darting,
Rays of living splendour shone!
With Him I learnt mankind's true glory ;
His aspect brightened mortal doom ;
And India ev'n mid Iceland hoary
For His beloved must laugh and bloom.

Then joy and love their power revealing,
Bade the whole earth in gladness rest ;
For every wound sprang herbs of healing,
Freely bounded every breast.
For His unnumbered bounties ever
His duteous child I still would be ;
When two or three are met together,
Assured that in the midst is He.

Oh, then go forth, all roads exploring,
And bid the wanderer hither come !
Stretch out your ready hand, restoring
Each lost one to our happy home.
Heaven is here with us residing,
By faith its bliss do we behold ;
To all with us in one faith biding
The everlasting gates unfold.

Round our hearts, so sorely loaded,
Closely twined sin's heavy curse ;
Darkling on we wandered, goaded
Or by desire or remorse.

Every soul appeared immortal;
 Man was touched if God the foe;
 And if Heaven smile, its accents awful
 Throned in judgment, death, and woe.

Saves if sin, it knows forgiving,
 No refuge ours, ev'n in the grave;
 When a Redeemer comes atoning,
 A Son if man, in might to save.
 His living love for souls enlightened
 Above our father-land is seen;
 Now, with hope, belief is heightened,
 Now reconciled with God are we.

Henceforward sin's dominion endeth,
 And golden springs gush from the dust;
 From sin to son this faith descendeth,
 Unfettered, in sacred trust.
 Hence life is sanctified and moveth
 Onward like some holy stream;
 And no regret departure proveth,
 For peace and love eternal beam.

HYMN II.

As the eastery sky is glowing,
 Happy Time again grows young;
 From golden springs of light fair-dawning
 Take one draught inspiring, long.

Blest fulfilment of long yearnings old,
Godlike apparent, gentlest love behold !

At last, at last to earth descending,
The holy Child of Heaven is come ;
Gales of life in music blending,
Breathe o'er the land awakening bloom—
Breathe into flame that never more expires,
The scattered embers of extinguished fires.

From the deep abyss reviving
New life and energies upspring.
See Him in life's ocean diving,
Endless peace for us to bring.
Lo, in the midst with bliss-bestowing hands,
Heedful of every suppliant He stands.

Let His aspect, mildly beaming,
Deeply sink thy soul within ;
Thus, His joys unmeasured, streaming
O'er thee, ever shalt thou win.
All spirits, hearts, and reasonings of men,
In choral harmony shall mingle then.

To reach His arms be thy endeavour ;
Impressed within His traits instil ;
Towards Him must thou turn for ever,
Spread forth unto the sunshine still.
Lay bare thine heart to Him, let all else perish,
And like a faithful spouse he will thee cherish.

Now is given with us is given
 The goodness and mercy found ;
 Wandering in the land of Heaven,
 From the north to southern bound—
 What swine and fowls your garden fair
 For us unending favour and fruit shall bear.

HYMN III.

O'er all the prison house whose light
 Of darkness my prison with promise bright,
 O'er my soul and soul's state :
 One, that mine sorrow and distress,
 Set free my spirit to confess
 His power for us who died.

My world if joys was crush'd and void,
 My house withered, peace destroyed,
 As flowers by cankering worm ;
 I saw my dearest hopes expire,
 The grave close o'er my last desire,
 Despair, my being's term.

With silent agony oppress,
 While mourning thus I longed for rest
 Earth never might restore ;
 Sudden a ray above me broke,
 The grave-stone rolled away—I woke
 To bliss undreamt before.

What glorious vision on me fell,
Ear may not hear, no tongue can tell,
 None other thought efface ;
That hour on memory graven deep
As the wide wounds it healed, shall keep
 Its ever brightening trace.

HYMN IV.

If I have only Him,
 If He alone is mine,
If ev'n beyond the grave His faith
 My heart shall not resign ;
Of sorrow nought I prove,
Nought feel but glad devotion, joy, and love.

If only He be mine,
 All else I gladly leave ;—
On pilgrim-staff still follow true,
 And to my Master cleave ;
Let others fondly stray
Along the broad, frequented flowery way.

If I have none but Him,
 Joyful to sleep I go ;
Ever a sweet restoring stream
 His blood for me doth flow,
Whose mild-compelling might
All things must soften and in peace unite.

If I have none but Him,
The universe is mine ;
Blest as a child of Heaven that holds
The Virgin's veil divine—
Wrapt in sacred thought,
No more by earthly cares am I distraught.

Where only He is mine,
My father-land I see,
And every boon is on me poured,
As birth-right full and free.
Long sought-for brothers then
In his disciples I behold again.

HYMN V.

THO' all men faith had banished,
Still true I 'd prove to Thee,
That gratitude quite vanished
From earth might never be.
For me hast thou borne sorrow,
For me death's bitter smart ;
Then gladly would I offer up
To Thee one constant heart.

That Thy dear life should perish
My burning tears deplore,
While many Thou wouldst cherish,
Forget Thee evermore.

Only by love's compulsion
So greatly hast Thou done,
Yet art Thou passed from earth away,
And no one thinks thereon.

With true love filled, unshaken,
Thou standest each beside ;
Ev'n tho' by all forsaken,
Faithful dost Thou abide.
The truest love must vanish,
Its power at last complete,
Melts the strong heart and childlike clings
Submissive at Thy feet.

Thee have I found—O never
Leave me forlorn again !
Bound up in Thee for ever
Let my whole soul remain.
My brethren, too, Thy glory
Might they but once behold,
Soon would they turn and joyful seek
Thy love's protecting fold.

HYMN VI.

I know not what I could desire
Wert Thou, dear Being, only mine ;
Wert Thou to crown my soul with gladness,
And still be near and call me Thine.

The vext crowd to and fro are hurrying,
With eager glance they search around ;
They call themselves the wise, the prudent,
And yet this treasure have not found.

One thinks his hand the prize now grasping,—
Lo ! what he hath is nought but gold ;
Another, earth and sea exploring,
Hath for a name his quiet sold.

One for the crown of victory striveth,
One for the poet's wreath of bay,
And thus the ever-changing glitter
Attracting all doth each betray.

To you Himself hath he revealed not ?
Can you forget Who died for you ?
Who for your sakes from life departed —
Yea, scorn and bitter anguish knew ?

Have ye not read, have ye not listened ?
Of Him, from Him ne'er heard a word ?
How He brought down divinest mercy,
What endless good on us conferred ?

How from high Heaven He descended,
Th' exalted Son of Mother blest ?
What tidings to the earth He carried —
How many healed by Him find rest ?

How, by pure love drawn down, He offered
Himself for us, a Victim free ?
Low laid in earth, of God's own temple
The eternal corner-stone to be.

And shall not such a message move you ?
Is not this man sufficient found ?
Your doors to Him will ye not open,
Who passed for you hell's dismal bound ?

Will ye not then lose all things gladly,
Forego with joy each idle thought,
Your hearts for Him alone reserving
Whose grace is promised you unbought ?

Lift Thou me up, Thou gentle Saviour !
Thou art my world, my life is Thine ;
Though nought of earthly hope were left me,
I know my recompense divine.

Thou all my love with love returnest ;
Thy truth for ever shall endure ;
The heavens bow down in adoration ;
Thou dwellest still within me sure.

HYMN VII.

THE DESIRE OF DEATH.

Away, below the earth's broad breast,
Far from light's realms descending !
Storms of woe and wild unrest
Departure glad portending ;
The narrow bark shall waft us o'er,
Full soon to land on Heaven's bright shore.

Blest be that everlasting night,
Blest, never-broken slumber !
Day with toils hath worn us quite,
Cares too long encumber ;
Now vain desires and roamings cease,
We seek our Father's house in peace.

What should we do in this cold world
With love and truth so tender ?
Old things are in oblivion hurled,
The new no gladness render.
O sorrowful his heart and love,
Who reverent loves the past and gone !

Those ages past, whose purer race
High thoughts with ardour fired,
When man beheld our Father's face,
And knew His hand desired ;
While many a simple mind sincere
Resembled still His image clear.

Those days of old, when flourished wide
 Stems of Patriarch story ;
When even children joyful died
 And suffered for Heaven's glory ;
While, though life laughed and pleasure spake,
Yet many a heart for strong love brake.

Those times of yore when God revealed
 Himself in young life glowing ;
With early death his Passion sealed,
 His precious blood bestowing ;
Nor turned aside the stings of pain,
Us nearer to Himself to gain.

Thro' deepening mists how vainly gaze
 Our fond thoughts, backward turning !
Nought in this dreary age allays
 The thirst within us burning.
We must arrive our home within,
That ancient holiness to win.

What still delays our wished return ?
 The loved have long been sleeping ;
Their grave our earthly journey's bourne,—
 Enough of fear and weeping !
With fruitless striving long annoyed,
The heart is weary, the world a void.

Strange rapture ever new, unknown,
 Thro' the faint frame is thrilling.
Hark ! the soft echo of our moan
 The hollow distance filling ;

Whence the beloved towards us bend,
Their breathings of desire ascend.

Down to the Bride, to Christ we go,
The Bridegroom gone before us ;
Be of good comfort, mourners ; lo,
Grey twilight deepens o'er us.
A dream dissolves our chains unblest
Our Father takes us to His rest.

HYMN VIII.

TO THE VIRGIN.

In a many a form I see thee oft,
O Mary ! beauteously portrayed ;
But never with such semblance soft
As to my soul thou camest arrayed.
I only know, the world's annoy
Since then like transient dream doth fade
And an eternal heaven of joy
My spirit hath its dwelling made.

FINIS.

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